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BIBLE TEACHINGS

CONCERNING ITS

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

By a Layman.

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—*Rom. 6:23.*

OAKLAND, CAL.:
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PREFACE.

[redacted]

ERRATA.

Page 16, fourth line from bottom, leave out "are."
" 63, eleventh line from top, "*shathath*" should be *shachath*.
" 59 Read chapter 24 instead of chap 3

but through faithful, loving service to their Lord, to make that life fuller and richer in bliss through the rewards meted out by him for such service. (See Matt. 10: 42.) And last and greatest, to claim for Jesus Christ that which the religious teachings of the age, if not formally, impliedly deny to him, but which he emphatically asserts to be his sole prerogative, the power to confer immortality upon men. John 5: 24, 29 and 10: 28. If there is truth in these pages, that God will use it for his glory; if error, that he will overrule it to the same end, is the earnest prayer of the AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

THE writer of this little book asks only for a prayerful, unprejudiced investigation of its subject matter from the Bible standpoint, regardless of creeds, and systems, and teachings of men. It is unnecessary for him to say that he possesses no literary ability, for one will scarcely read this short preface without making that discovery.

His purpose in giving these pages to the public is threefold. First, to bring to the attention of the learned and influential of our religious teachers, the impressions which the language of the Bible, understood in the sense generally attached to it in ordinary use, makes upon a person of common intelligence, who, sincerely desiring to know the truth, seeks it at the Fountain Head, in humble dependence upon the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit. And for a second object, to strengthen the faith and comfort the hearts of believers in general, to stimulate them not only to secure a life without end, but through faithful, loving service to their Lord, to make that life fuller and richer in bliss through the rewards meted out by him for such service. (See Matt. 10: 42.) And last and greatest, to claim for Jesus Christ that which the religious teachings of the age, if not formally, impliedly deny to him, but which he emphatically asserts to be his sole prerogative, the power to confer immortality upon men. John 5: 24, 29 and 10: 28. If there is truth in these pages, that God will use it for his glory; if error, that he will overrule it to the same end, is the earnest prayer of the AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I.

AFTER deciding that the Bible is a revelation from God of man's relation to him as the Creator, and of his purposes regarding the race, any one who seeks to learn from its pages what those purposes are, must first of all settle the meaning of these two words, "life," "death," for since to teach men how to attain the one and avoid the other, is the main purpose of this revelation, if any ambiguity attaches to these words, the whole Bible must necessarily be to the same degree ambiguous.

If the student is content to rest his knowledge of Scripture truth upon the opinion of others, it will be comparatively easy, and to a degree profitable, to take some commentator of acknowledged piety and learning, and follow where he leads the way. The searcher for truth may be sure that he shall find a well-beaten path for his feet, leading through smiling fields, and beside still waters; while every now and again from some jutting headland, he shall get a glimpse of the gates of pearl, and almost hear the songs of triumph from the blessed ones who have passed within these heavenly portals. This journey may prove very enjoyable, but the traveler will fail of attaining that vigor and energy which, in religious character, as in physical development,

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come only from exercise. Better, it seems to me, to take the word itself, relying upon the promise of God to guide us into the truth. It is true that at the first we may feel called upon to clear up those hidden things which belong to God, and only learn our error when upon some dizzy height, from which we dare not turn our downward look, we see still above us altitudes to which no seraph's wing may hope to soar, and humbly retrace our steps to lower levels. Or, it may be that we shall try to sound the deep things of God, and through days and weeks keep on adding piece after piece to our short line of investigation, till at last we learn that no finite understanding can hope to fathom the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of the Infinite. But these attempts, though unsuccessful, if made in a reverential, filial spirit, will not have been fruitless. We will have learned more of God than we knew before, and for a child of God, this is to be drawn nearer to him, and become more like him.

It is also true that the course of study advocated may be marked by slow progress, but what advance is made will be in the direction best suited to the learner's need. The word of God is the food by which our religious natures are to be nourished and developed; and as that which some require for healthy growth physically is unnecessary or even harmful to others, and each, if he expects health and sustenance, must select that which his system demands, and avoid that which disagrees with it; so the table which God in his word has spread for his children, has every variety which any one can need,—milk for babes, strong meat for those of

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larger growth, reproof for the presumptuous, caution for the unwary, promises for the discouraged, reproof for the careless, rest for the weary, and the all-loving, all-sufficient Christ for every human need. But to this table so bountifully spread by their Father, God's children must come, and each, for himself, take that which his personal needs demand, not trusting to some stray crumb from the hand of another, unsuited, perhaps, to his wants, and insufficient in supply. The Bible, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, furnishes the food for our religious life, and, like our material nourishment, this food must be taken and assimilated by each one for himself, if he is to progress far beyond the stage of infancy.

Under what, at the time, appeared to the writer a very trying providence, he was compelled to leave his family, and sojourn for several years in an extremely isolated condition, when prompted, he trusts, by the Holy Spirit, he was, in the many leisure hours at his command, led to seek to know for himself what the teachings of God's word were. And with no human help save Alford's New Testament for English readers, and Cruden's Concordance, he began the study of the Bible, relying upon the promises, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine," and "if he lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him."

As before stated, it seemed imperative that the meaning of these two words, "life" and "death," should be clearly defined before a satisfactory study of the Bible could be pursued. Whatever definition is given to "life," we must adopt its contrary as the meaning of "death," and the converse of this is equally true. And

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more than this, we must adopt such definitions for both as will make the Bible intelligible and harmonious as a whole, so far as man's relation to God, and his duties and hopes growing out of this relation, are the subject. Diplomats may think and say that language is made to conceal the meaning of the speaker, but it is incredible that God should give to man a revelation concerning matters of such momentous import, in language of doubtful or uncertain meaning. The above had been written years before the following from the pen of the late Daniel Webster met my eye. He says: "I believe the Bible is to be understood and received in the plain and obvious meaning of its passages. Since I cannot persuade myself that a book intended for the instruction and conversion of the whole world, should cover its true meaning in any such mystery and doubt that none but critics or philosophers can discover it."

Aside from the haze in which the teachings of the schools have enveloped it, every one understands well enough what life is in its manifestations, though it may well be, that only he who says of himself, "I am the life," knows, or ever will know, what it is in its essence. That life in its highest sense, or eternal life, does not mean, as the evangelical churches teach, a renewal of those filial relations with God which sin had interrupted, and blessedness consequent upon such renewal, seems, among other reasons, apparent from the precautions taken by God after the fall of our first parents, lest Adam should gain access to the "tree of life and eat and live forever." It is not necessary for the present purpose that we determine, or even imagine, what this tree

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of life was. Whatever it may have been, the Bible clearly implies that it was accessible to Adam, and that, partaken of, its effects would be to confer upon the sinful pair an *unending life.* The words of God are, "And now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever." Gen. 3:22. If, as the churches teach, eternal life means the return of man in penitence and faith to God, a changed character and the blessedness resulting from God's favor, then this action on the part of God is utterly at variance with all that he tells us is his will concerning us, and with all his recorded dealings with our race. Could access to the tree of life have absolved man from guilt, re-implanted in his nature a love for God, and holy proclivities and actions, God certainly would not so carefully have cut off all approach to the tree, but, on the contrary, would have made haste to direct the fallen man to its healing virtues, through which, not only would the evils consequent upon the fall be repaired, but this relation once restored should continue *forever.* This condition of things is what God repeatedly assures us is just what he wishes to bring about (See Eze. 18:32; 33:11; 2 Pet. 3:9); and if access to the tree of life could have accomplished it, all the subsequent rebellion of the race, and the humiliation and death of his well-beloved Son could have been avoided. The meaning of the expression "live forever," in this place, is made plainer by comparing Deut. 32:40, where Jehovah says, "I lift my hand to heaven and say, I live forever." What God asserts here, regarding himself, is the eternal duration of his being, without any reference to his moral perfections

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so in Gen. 3:22, where the same expression is applied to Adam, it must mean the eternal duration of his being, without any reference to his moral character.

And with this understanding of the language there is nothing mysterious, nothing inconsistent in shutting off from Adam all approach to the tree of life. As said before, what this tree of life was, we are not told, nor need we be. It was some provision made by the Creator availing himself of which, Adam, had he passed his probation successfully, would have secured for himself and his posterity eternal life. By eternal life I wish to be understood as meaning here, and throughout these pages, a life as unending as is that which God claims for himself in Deut. 32:40, where he says, "I live forever," with no reference to the conditions pertaining to it. There was now danger that Adam might turn to this tree of life as a remedy for the ills he had brought upon himself by transgression, and become possessed of an eternal existence, before being reconciled to his offended Creator, thus perpetuating forever a deformed and marred specimen of a being made originally very good. If eternal life means what the churches tell us it means, then all that God has revealed of his own glorious character, all that he has repeatedly declared concerning his desire that the wicked should turn and live, assures us that he would at once have pointed out to Adam the way of restoration to all he had lost, and bade him eat and live forever. Thus the work of Satan should have been at once undone, man reinstated in his pristine relation to God, never again to be impaired, and Gethsemane, and Calvary would never have

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astonished the angelic beholders with their awful mysteries.

But if to live forever means just that, and nothing else, and the partaking of the tree of life by Adam was to confer eternal life upon this sinful creature and all his posterity, irrespective of their return to God, and submission to his holy will, then how consistent is God with himself, and with all his declared purposes respecting the race, in guarding the way to the tree of life. Every attribute of his glorious character shines out most resplendently from this, to me, otherwise inexplicable mystery; and from the flaming sword, turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life, flashes forth not only the hatred of God for sin, but his unspeakable love for the sinner; not only his inflexible justice, but his infinite mercy. In cutting man off from eternal life in Eden, equally with procuring it for him on Calvary, is it true—

> "Here the whole Deity is known,
> Nor dare a creature guess
> Which of the glories brightest shone,
> The justice or the grace."

While the uniform declaration of Scripture is that it is the will of God that men should escape from death and obtain eternal life, the condition precedent just as uniformly is, that they must come back to him in sincere repentance and humble faith; and for Adam to have become possessed of eternal life by eating of the tree of life without first turning to God in repentance and faith, would have subverted God's plans, and accomplished what Satan apparently had in view,—the perpetuation

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of a portion, at least, of the race, eternally existent, and, like himself, eternally at enmity with God and all good. With this definition of the words "live forever," the incident, as related, is within the comprehension of a child. Can any other definition of "live forever" make it plain, even to the highest intellect? So far, it does not seem as if "life" can mean filial relation towards God, on the part of man, and the consequent favor of God, with all the blessedness resulting therefrom. Therefore "death" cannot mean sinful proclivities, alienation from God and his consequent disfavor, with all the infelicity growing out of this relation, for whatever meaning is given to one of the words, "life" and "death," its contrary must be found in the other; the constant usage of Scripture makes this necessary.

In Gen. 2:7, we read, "and man became a *living soul*." This term living soul, in chapter 1:20, 21, 24, is applied to the water and land animals equally with Adam in this *verse. How did man become a living soul? It is said in the immediate context, "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground," but this form was inert, wanting in that which even the meanest reptile then crawling upon the earth possessed, until, as the record goes on to say, his Creator "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," in consequence of which the heretofore motionless form was vitalized in common with the other creatures. Is there any intimation here, even the most remote, that the life conferred by the Creator consisted in the enjoyment by Adam of the favor of God, or in the happiness

* Murphy on Gen., page 84.

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bestowed upon him, or in the innocence possessed by the new creature, or in his moral rectitude and harmony with the will of God? If there is, I have not found any one to point it out to me. If Murphy is authority for the rendering of the original, in the mere matter of life, man and the animals possessed it in common. This all seems to accord with the plain declaration of the Bible in other places. Speaking of the lower order of animal life in Lev. 11:10, God says, "of all that move in the waters, and of any *living thing* which is in the waters," also in Eze. 47:9, "every *thing that liveth*, which moveth." "Living thing" in the first quotation, and "thing that liveth," in the second, are in the original the same words that in Gen. 2:7 are translated "living soul." These are in addition to Gen. 1:20, 21, 24, where the same Hebrew words are used in reference to the brutes. One more quotation in this connection will suffice. Gen. 7:22 reads, "all in whose *nostrils* was the *breath of life*, of all that was in the dry land, died." The Hebrew here for "nostril . . . breath of life" is the same that in Gen. 2:7 is used in narrating the process of giving life to the first man. From the testimony of the Bible it appears that so far as life itself is concerned, it was bestowed by the Creator upon the lower order of his creatures, as well as upon man who stood at the head of all his works on earth; and as concerns the possession of life, there is no difference between the man and the brute, and it is to be carefully noted that in the passages before quoted, the words used in the original for "living" and "life" are the same in all the different texts, so that whatever life means in one place it must mean the others.

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While insisting that the same meaning attaches to the word "life" both for man and brute in the before quoted verses, I by no means claim that, morally or intellectually, the lives of all animate creatures move on the same plane; for in this respect they are radically different. What I do assert, and shall endeavor to prove from the word of God, is that the intellect and moral sense in man, and the instinct in the brute, is not the respective life of each, but merely properties pertaining to life. Discarding all prejudice, and standing by the entire word of God, aside from human creeds, and simply comparing scripture with scripture, I think it capable of absolute demonstration, that neither man's relations to God as an accountable being, his original innocence and attendant felicity, nor the renewal of the filial relation broken by sin, and the resultant happiness, any, or all of them combined, constitute his life, or any part of his life, as the word is used in the quotations made, but are merely conditions under which his life is developed and maintained.

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CHAPTER II.

FROM the Bible alone, comparing the various passages in which the word is used and adopting a definition that attaches no ambiguity to any of them, nor needs any labored explanation to make the meaning plain to an ordinary mind, I understand the term "life," as applied to man in the Bible, to mean that principle conferred by the Creator, through the operation of which both his material and immaterial parts are maintained in being, enabled to subserve the end of their creation, and preserved from disorganization and consumption. The word is also used, at times, to designate the outward, visible activities of the organism it pervades and preserves; but this is a secondary meaning. It may be objected that the immaterial part of man, *i. e.*, the soul, is not subject to disorganization; but is not this a mere assumption, and a wrong one? Is not life as necessary to the soul, to guard it against disorganization and extinction, as it is to the body?

The immaterial part of man, called the soul, wills, elects, loves, fears, and suffers, wholly independently of the body; and the discharge of these functions, so diverse in their character, necessitates an organism of varied capabilities; for, to use the argument of Paul (1 Cor. 12:17), If the whole soul were a will, where were the love? If

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the whole were perception, where were the choosing? These functions necessitate the organism by which they are discharged, or an harmonious arrangement in one being, of several powers and faculties with the conditions necessary for their exercise; and this, it seems to me, may properly be called an organism. The principle which preserves this organism intact, is its life; and that which holds the material part of man secure against disorganization and decay, is its life. Going still farther, that which sustains the oak in being, through the centuries, or preserves the fragile plant, blooming its single summer in the garden border, is respectively the life of each.

I therefore restate my definition of life as being that principle conferred by the Creator, through the operation of which both the material and immaterial parts of man are maintained in being, and preserved from disorganization and consumption, and enabled to subserve the end of their creation. If the above is the true definition of life, then death cannot mean irreclaimably sinful habits, or alienation from God and all good, nor eternal, unmitigated sorrow and sufferings; but simply the withdrawal of this vital principle, and the consequent disorganization and extinction of that which its presence had preserved in being, and made active in the direction of the end for which it was created. And this definition of death applies equally to man, beast, or vegetable, and needs no explanation to make clear the meaning of any passage in the Bible where the word is used.

In John 19 : 19, we read that when our Lord was crucified, Pilate had written and put upon his cross,

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"Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews;" "and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin." It would have been a comparatively easy matter for a person knowing either one of these languages to ascertain what the corresponding word in either of the other inscriptions meant, though entirely ignorant of the language in other respects. So the Rosetta stone, by its one sentence in a known language, gave the key with which to unlock the secrets of the otherwise unintelligible characters upon its face. In like manner, some texts of Scripture seem so arranged that we may obtain a clear understanding as to what was the mind of the Spirit regarding the meaning of these words, "life" and "death." One of these passages is found in Eze. 33 : 11, and reads, "Say unto them, As *I live*, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" That which separates Jehovah from all else in the universe and which he claims as the distinctive mark of his Deity, is his being. Others there may be who are holy even as he, who are so strong in virtue as to defy the fiercest assaults of evil, whose power is equal to creating worlds, and whose wisdom may suffice to govern them; but if there are such exalted intelligences as these, all their powers, yes, their very being itself, is derived from him who claims for himself alone, inherent uncreated existence.

We are told in the third chapter of Exodus, when God appeared to Moses at Horeb, that Moses hesitated about going to his countrymen in Egypt, and when he

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asked the name of the God who sent him, God replied, "Say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me." This distinctive quality of uncreated, self-sustained being, God repeatedly alludes to, when he wishes to impress upon men, with the utmost emphasis, some important truth. "As I live saith the Lord," is an expression many times used in the Bible, and "As the Lord liveth," became in the mouths of prophets and holy men the most solemn form of affirmation.

But to return to the verse quoted from Ezekiel, What is the evident meaning of the words "live" and "die?"

Language, if it is to be intelligible, must be constant in its meaning, *i. e.*, the same word in the same or similar connections must be supposed to convey the same idea. Of course there are figures of speech wherein words are taken out of the line of their ordinary meaning; but even in such cases, the relation of the language to the object referred to is such that there can be no need for mistake. For instance, when we read of the "wings of the wind," the "throne of God," the "sword of the Spirit," the "music of the spheres," the dullest intellect recognizes the figure and apprehends the meaning. But when treating of ordinary things, and especially when putting on record important historical facts for the instruction of mankind, or edicts for the government of nations, such a use of language is not permissible, but is carefully guarded against. If an earthly government should affix a penalty to the crime of treason, using such ambiguous language that one judge should declare it meant life-long imprisonment, another banish-

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ment to some penal colony with severe labor, and a third interpret it as awarding death, the whole world would say that such a government was unfit to continue a day.

I cannot believe that he who created man and placed him under obligation of obedience to his laws, has been less guarded or explicit than are human rulers in the choice of the language used for announcing his decrees and affixing his penalties to their transgression. When he says, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," he employs no figure of speech to conceal the fearful import of the words. When he says, "As I live I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth" (Eze. 18; 32), his life is contrasted with the death of the wicked; and when in the same verse he calls upon the wicked to turn from his wickedness "and live," it is that he shall come into possession of that which the speaker in the same verse claims to possess exclusively as an inherent principle, viz., "life." When God says, "As I live," he has no reference to his holiness, or his wisdom, or his power, or beatitude. He most clearly does refer to the distinctive quality which he claims for himself alone as the uncreated life. Therefore when in the same verse and connection he calls upon the wicked to turn "and live," he does not call him primarily to the practice of holiness, for this is included in the turning, the result of which is the obtaining life; and for the forgiven sinner to live must be the same thing essentially as for the forgiving Creator to live; although life inheres in the one and is communicated to the other.

At the risk of being tedious, let me ask atten-

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tion to this eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel from a different point of observation, which, though in a measure embracing the previous view, extends somewhat in another direction. In verse 4, God says, "The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die," and in verse 27 where "the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness . . . . and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his *soul* alive." The first point to be made here is that the life and death spoken of in this chapter do not apply to the material part of man, or this present stage of being; for as regards these, all men, the righteous and the wicked, fare alike; therefore these terms must refer to continued, eternal life, and radical, permanent death. The one must also be understood as contrary to the other, for verse 13 places them in this relation. It says, "He shall not live; . . . he shall surely die," and the contrast is repeated in verse 21 in the same words, with the order reversed, "He shall surely live, he shall not die." Then again it is to be observed that the Hebrew word translated soul is the same used in Gen. 2 : 7, "and man became a living *soul*." I am aware that this word "soul" is often used to designate a personality, as, for instance, the members of Abram's family when he left Haran are spoken of as "all the souls he had gotten in Haran." Gen. 12 : 2. Neither is this the only other sense in which it is used; but whether employed to signify the affections, or the life, or a person, I do not recollect any place where the connection does not serve to make its meaning plain. The point, however, which I wish to make from this eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel, is not affected either way by this varied use of the word. It is simply this,

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that the soul which God gave to Adam at his creation is subject to death, for its Creator asserts that in certain events it shall die, and no longer live. If this is so, the soul of man cannot be immortal, for the word "immortal" means deathless, imperishable, not subject to death.

At this point our religious teachers meet us with the explanation, "But this death that is spoken of here is spiritual death which the soul shall experience." And when they are asked what spiritual death is, they reply that it is estrangement from God, the loss of spiritual perceptions, the spiritual eyes are blind to spiritual light, the ears deaf to spiritual truth, and the whole spiritual nature is as insensible to spiritual things as the senses of a man physically dead are to natural objects. I have asked several ministers the meaning of spiritual death and think the above is the fairest statement that can be made of the answers they give. Now this is the very condition the sinful soul is already in; how then does God say, "If you sin you shall come into this condition?" There is no pertinence to the threat. It is as if God had said, "The soul that is dead shall die." This single consideration should seemingly be enough to set aside the explanation as insufficient and unsatisfactory.

But again, in verse 23, God says, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" Now "the wicked" are exactly in that condition described as spiritual death, so the verse really should read, "Have I any pleasure at all that the spiritually dead should die?" If this is the proper interpretation, and to be wicked is to be spiritually dead, then there is an ulterior death for them to undergo which is all that I am contending for. But where

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do our teachers find their warrant for the use of this term, "spiritual death"? I do not find it anywhere in the Bible, and by all generally accepted usage, life must precede death, and so far as the Bible teaches us anything regarding this matter, it is that by nature man has no life of this kind to lose. Our Lord, in John 3 : 6, 7, says "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit; marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Paul teaches the same truth in 1 Cor. 15 : 45, 46. "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a life-giving Spirit; howbeit, that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual," clearly teaching that by nature as derived from Adam man possesses a "living soul," but attains to no spiritual nature until, through the offices of Jesus Christ on his behalf, he is begotten from above, and brought under the operation of his life-giving Spirit. This may come in sharp conflict with long-cherished beliefs and deep-rooted prejudices, but if language can convey ideas, this is what the language of the Bible says.

This part of the argument is purposely left incomplete as it will naturally reappear in a later chapter.

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CHAPTER III.

AS the living Father hath sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me, even he also, shall live because of me." John 6:57. This is an utterance by our divine Master, making still clearer than does Eze. 33:11 the meaning to be given to this word "life." That passage which we considered in the last chapter, though coming as from God himself, was enunciated through a human mouth-piece, and may, perhaps correctly, be thought to have its true meaning somewhat obscured through the imperfection of the medium; but in the passage before us there is no such possibility. He who speaks is the Eternal Word, without whom nothing was made that was made. He also was the life, and knew, as possibly none but God does know, what, in its essence, is that mysterious principle which we call life. At this place he brings the life of the Father, his own life, and the life of believers in him, into such a relation to each other that the meaning of any one of the three being given, that of the others must readily be found. "The living Father." Repeatedly, in the gospels and epistles, the qualification of "living" is prefixed in speaking of God; and though in the New Testament he is spoken of as the "God of peace," "The only wise God," "The God of hope, "The most high

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God" (but this is evidently a quotation from Gen. 14:18), "The God of all Grace," and in Revelation four times, as "God Almighty," still the prefix "living" is used oftener than all the others together, showing that to those of the new dispensation who were the most illumined by the Holy Spirit, life, more than any or every other quality, was, to them, that which most widely separated God from all his creatures. In order to apprehend the full meaning of this word "living," as used by our Lord in connection with the Father, let us look at some other passages where it is used, and consider its connections.

In Matt. 22:32, Jesus, in arguing with the Sadducees regarding the resurrection, says, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," and the Greek word translated living there, is the same used in John 6:57. Living men are, by our Lord, contrasted with dead men; there is not the remotest allusion or reference to any moral condition, or to any state of happiness or suffering, and I do not see where any man or any class of men obtain the authority to say that, in using the word, he meant one thing by it in one place and something radically different in the other places. If, then, in Matt. 22:32, the word is used in its ordinary sense, as designating a living being as contrasted with one deprived of life, why should we not attach a similar meaning to it in John 6:57? It does not seem that we can avoid doing so, if we submit the verse to the test applied to Eze. 33:11 in the last chapter. But this is not the only clue to the meaning of the word "living." In Luke 24:5, the angel says to the women at the sepulcher, "Why seek ye the living among the dead," and in Revelation 1:18,

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our risen Lord says of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore; and have the keys of hades and of death." Life and death as here used cannot relate to the moral or spiritual condition of the being referred to, or to his happiness or misery. The contrast is not between such conditions, but between the presence of that principle of life which preserves from disorganization whatever it pervades, and its absence, death.

If the death, which, in the last text, Jesus says he experienced, had no relation to moral or spiritual conditions, why should the death to which he holds the keys, and which must mean eternal death, be defined as a moral or spiritual condition? And so, also, of the life in the last quotation. If, in the person of Jesus himself, this does not relate to any moral or spiritual condition, but to vital being, where is the authority for saying and insisting that the life which he promises all who will accept it at his hands, is not a like vital existence, but only the conditions under which that existence shall be passed, and by which it shall be influenced? If *zōē aiōnios*, used in the sixth chapter of John's gospel, in four places, means in the Greek unending holiness, and supreme felicity, why not translate it so instead of giving it an arbitrary equivalent in English, and then, defining the equivalent to mean something which, in the ordinary acceptance of the language, it does not mean?

This course would make plain, to the mind of the ordinary reader, many points that under the present plan are very much confused. In this verse in John 6:57 the Greek word translated life is used three times, once as

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pertaining to the Father, once to the Lord Jesus Christ and once to the believers on the Lord; and it is impossible that it can have one meaning in relation to one of the persons spoken of, and something radically different in relation to the others. Our Lord in the entire chapter is evidently speaking of *life*, and not of the conditions attaching to it. The Jews demanded his credentials as a prophet or the Messiah, saying that when Moses required obedience he gave proof that he was commissioned by God to exact it, by feeding and sustaining the lives of the people on the manna supplied in a miraculous way. Jesus replied that in attestation of his divine authority he would, upon all that believed on him, confer eternal life. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread which cometh down out of heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." The death experienced by their fathers, had no reference to the circumstances connected with it. Some died in the course of nature, from old age, some were consumed by fire out of heaven, some were swallowed up by the opening of the earth, and went down alive into the pit, some died rebels in heart and act toward God, and some in faith and love; none of these conditions under which they gave up their physical life are so much as alluded to; the one indisputable fact was that "they died."

The time at length came to each one when the manna supplied by Moses had no sustaining power, and as regards this stage of existence they ceased to be. Now, in contrast to this, Jesus speaks of himself as possessed of power to sustain eternally the lives of

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all who believe in him, and the death which he thus averts for believers is so compared with the death that Moses was powerless to prevent that both must be taken to mean essentially the same, *i. e.*, the cessation of being. In one case it is the termination of this stage of our being; in the other it is the termination of the future stage of being. If we begin at "the living Father," accepting the qualifying prefix as referring to essential, uncreated life, inhering in God, and trace this down through the God-man to the believer, giving to him an unending life, independent of the conditions under which it is maintained, we have a clear, connected, harmonious whole.

The Father, sole possessor of uncreated, unending being, the Son, the manifestation of the invisible God through his union with the Father, partaking in all its fullness of the same, and the believer, through the begetting from above, brought into union with the Son, and thus his eternal life secured. In John 14:19, Jesus says to his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also," and this is additional evidence that the eternal life, which our Lord so emphatically and repeatedly claims, can be given to men only by himself,* is to be understood of vital existence; otherwise there would be but little force in the statement, and no connection between the premise and the conclusion.

The argument appears to be this: I am about to die. For a little while I shall be taken away from you and laid in the grave. Your light will go out in darkness, your hope expire in despair. But I will not finally

*Jno. 5:21, 25, 26; 6:47; 10:28.

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leave you thus. I will come to you again. Although the world shall see me no more, ye shall see me, and my appearing alive again after my crucifixion shall demonstrate to you my power over death, and assure you of obtaining the eternal life I have promised, and the ground for your assurance shall be that you see me possessed of a life which death could not destroy, and because I have it, you may be sure that you shall possess it also. Now if life for their Lord means the vital essence by which he is, and continues to be, and through the operation of which he rose from the grave, his disciples might legitimately conclude that he could confer the same upon them, but it would be no warrant for their assuming that he would bestow upon them something else. He will, of his abounding grace, bestow upon his redeemed ones unnumbered and inestimable blessings according to his other promises, but their expectation regarding these is not based upon this "because I have life," nor dependent upon it. It also follows that unless the life which Jesus bestows is of the same nature with that he possesses, there is no logical sequence from the "because I have life," to the "ye shall also have life."

We have wandered away from John 6:57, with which we began the chapter, though the digression has not taken us away from the subject matter of the verse. The specific promise made by the Lord in the verse is just this: "As I *live* because of the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall *live* because of me." The life of the Father, the life of the Son, and the life of the believer must, if language is to be understood, all be the

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same in character, though different in intensity. If life for the believer means the development in him of the Christian graces, and the subjection of all sinful passions and proclivities, and the final attainment of complete holiness and perfect beatitude in the heavenly paradise, then life for the Father and the Son must mean the same; but the whole context, as well in the original as in the translation, forbids any such definition of the word, as applied to the Father and the Son, consequently it cannot be so defined as applied to believers.

A little consideration of the twenty-first verse of the fifth chapter of this same Gospel may confirm this position. We there read, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth them life, even so the Son giveth life to whosoever he will;" and in the twenty-sixth verse, "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." The Father being himself the essence and source of all life, the Son, by his oneness with the Father, is equally so, and this quality of inherent life pertaining to the Deity he can reproduce in other beings at his will. But, as in all the laws which God has made, the operations of which come under our observation, we see *like* uniformly producing *like*, and the offspring, in its nature, closely resembling the progenitor, so we must believe, in the absence of any authority to the contrary, that the life which flows out from the "Living God" is, in its nature, clearly analagous to his own life, though he may permit, or cause it to be maintained, under very varied conditions in different orders of beings or even in

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individuals of the same class. In the fifth and sixth chapters of John, where so much is said of eternal life as derived from Jesus Christ, there is no allusion, in the remotest degree, to happiness or misery, to harmony with God, or rebellion against him, to sin or holiness, to punishment or reward, in connection with the subject, except the gift of life by the Son to believers, and by implication the loss of it to all who fail to obtain it from his hand; for in the fifty-third verse of the sixth chapter he emphatically asserts that, aside from his work, there is no life *in* man; all the life he has is from without, and may at any moment be withdrawn.

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CHAPTER IV.

IN the preceding pages, my case, though by no means complete, has been so far presented that it is perhaps advisable to devote this chapter to a consideration of some of the objections which are urged by Christians against the definition herein given to "life" and "death." The only objections that will be considered will be those based upon the Bible, for it is from this book alone that I hope for the confirmation of my views if true, or will accept their refutation if erroneous. The first objection most likely to be raised is that this life-giving, which was treated of in the last chapter, is not literally a bestowal of life, but a bringing of the soul out from under the power of sinful passions and affections, which, so long as they continue dominant, keep the man in a state of spiritual death. On page 23, chapter 2, we considered the term "spiritual death" in one light, leaving the subject to be resumed at this point for further investigation. The above objection is sustained by quoting Eph. 2 : 1, "who were dead in trespasses and sins," and Col. 2 : 13, "And you being dead in your sins . . . . . hath he made alive together with him," *i. e.* Jesus—texts which, to many, appear entirely subversive of my position, while to me they only serve to strengthen and confirm it. The Revised Version in both places reads

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"through" instead of "in," making the meaning much plainer.

Let us first take Eph. 2 : 1. In the first part of this epistle, Paul, referring possibly to Jewish believers, says they have been predestinated to the adoption of children and accepted in the Beloved, in whom they have obtained an inheritance that they should be to his glory who first trusted in Christ. Thus to Eph. 1 : 12, where the "us" of verse 3 is dropped and the Ephesian converts are addressed: "In whom ye also trusted" and "were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." In 2 Cor. 5 : 4, 5, Paul tells us of what the Spirit was the earnest; we there read, "We who are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life," *i. e.*, that a life subject to death might be merged in or succeeded by a life not subject to death, or eternal life. "Now he who hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the *earnest of the Spirit.*" So we see tha the purchased possession of Eph. 2 : 1 is eternal life, as the earnest or pledge of which, God had given them the Holy Spirit; and Paul prays for these Ephesian believers, that they might have given them wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding, that they might know that the same mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead, was pledged thus effectively to work on their behalf; now comes the verse quoted, "And you hath he made alive, when you were dead because of your trespasses and sins." There appears to be nothing here that necessi-

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tates or makes possible the introduction of any other life or death than the same which we have all along been considering. The death Paul is writing of is the death incurred by transgression, which passed upon all men because of their trespasses and sins; and the life is so associated with the resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ that there is no possibility of separating it from that life which it is his prerogative to bestow upon men. Thus far for Eph. 2 : 1. Col. 2 : 13 reads, "And you, being dead because of your sins . . . . hath he made alive together with him," *i. e.*, Christ. Chapter 3, verse 1, goes on to say, "If ye are risen with Christ," referring to Col. 2 : 12, "seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. . . . . For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Here again is the same state of things repeated. We are dead because of sin; made alive by Jesus Christ. Paul tells them that they had no life of their own, that they were dead, and the only source to which they could turn for life was Jesus Christ, whose life-giving power and the effects it produced were brought to our notice in the last chapter.

Our definition of life and death seems as well adapted to explain these two verses as any other; indeed they need no explaining except, perhaps, as regards the tenses of the verbs. Paul says ye *are* dead. I understand this as meaning that, because of sin, man had incurred the penalty affixed to sin, which is death—eternal death, with no hope of a resurrection. Rom. 4 : 17 says that God "speaketh of those things which are *not* as though they *were*." Col. 3 : 3 and the verse above quoted, speak

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of men as *already* dead. Rom. 5 : 12 says, "*death* passed upon all men," and in Rom. 8 : 30 we read, "And whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The very last of the race, who shall be made a partaker of the grace of God through his Son, is spoken of by Paul as in the sight of God already glorified, and, as most generally spoken of in the Bible, the whole race of man was as much dead when Adam sinned in Eden, as the saints were glorified when, in the councils of eternity, infinite love and wisdom devised redemption for them.

In these quotations from Ephesians and Colossians, Paul merely says to believers, when, because of your sins, you had come under the penalty of death, Jesus Christ interposed, and by his own death redeemed you and gave you eternal life. The words he used are "dead" and "alive," not some spiritual, mental, or moral condition resembling death or life, but the thing itself. As *regards God and his word*, man, aside from Jesus Christ, down to the very last one who shall stand upon this earth, is already dead; and every one who shall accept the offers of his grace, glorified. It is only as *regards man's experiences*, that the death and the glory are in the future. It is asserted by many that the *being in this sinful condition*, spoken of in Eph. 2 : 1 and Col. 2 : 13, *is death*, and that this is the meaning of the word as used there and in like passages. Such an understanding of the term would necessitate paraphrasing such passages as follows: "And you who were estranged from God by wicked works, disobedient to his commands, oblivious to his perfections and the beauties of holiness,

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despisers of his love, and aliens from his favor, hath he brought back to himself, made conformable to his will, revealed to you the excellence that is in himself, given you the spirit of a child, and a place in your father's house and heart."

The former of these conditions they say is what is meant by death, *i. e.*, spiritual death; and the latter is by them called life, *i. e.*, spiritual life. The erroneous character of such an assumption cannot fail to be perceived upon a little examination. Sin is nowhere in the Bible recognized as death; but from Gen. 2 : 17, where death is first mentioned, to Rev. 21 : 8, where the word is last used, sin is uniformly stated as the *procuring cause* of death. Rom. 5 : 12 says, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Death, in the above, is plainly the *penalty* for sin, and not the sinful state into which mankind had fallen, and by means of which the *penalty* was incurred. Rom. 6 : 21 says, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death." Any definite course of action, and the penalty attached to such a line of conduct, or the results arrived at by it, are certainly separate and distinct things. Therefore the end of this sinful course being death, the course pursued to reach this end cannot also be death. Rom. 6 : 23, "For the wages of sin is death." No one will attempt to show that the service rendered, and the wages received for the service performed, are identical. And to be dead because of sin and trespass is as different a thing from a sinful condition, at enmity with God, as

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are the wages paid for a piece of work done by a man a different thing from the work by which the wages were earned. Therefore, if the wages of sin is death, the sin, by which the wages were earned, cannot be death also. The civil law says that vagrancy is a misdemeanor to be punished by imprisonment. But vagrancy is one thing and the imprisonment a very different thing. Supposing a poor wretch, convicted of vagrancy, should be told by the Court, "You shall go on wandering about, picking up your food where you can, sheltering yourself as best you may, ragged, homeless, and forlorn," and the judge should say to him, "This is what the statute means by imprisonment," would he not be thought a lunatic? Again, suppose a sinner at the bar of God, found guilty of estrangement from him by wicked works, of disobedience to his commands, and rebellion against his authority, of indifference to his perfections and of despising the offers of his grace, should be told by the Judge of living and dead that he should go on doing just as he had been doing, and that this was death, the penalty prescribed for transgression, would the anomaly be less than in the other case? I may seem needlessly prolix in regard to these passages from Ephesians and Colossians, but they are so much depended on to overthrow the position taken regarding the meaning of *death* in these pages that it seemed important to give them full consideration.

That I have not misrepresented the position of the orthodox churches on this point will be seen in the following pages. I asked an esteemed brother in Christ, a doctor of divinity of an evangelical denomination, to

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give me his definition of eternal life as I had heard it in the pulpit the preceding Sunday. It is as follows, and I think it is the accepted one in all the churches. He says:—

"God's gift to man is eternal life; sin is death; unchecked, unremedied, unpardoned, it ultimates in the destruction of the moral nature. The remedy for darkness is light, for ignorance, knowledge, and for sin (which is death), life. This is God's answer to the question of questions, How shall man be saved from sin? 'Give him a fresh gift of life.' As the Chicago River was cured of its foulness by pouring Lake Michigan through it, so is man rescued from depravity and ruin by a fresh impartation of life from God. What is life? It consists in actions, conduct. But back of conduct lies the will, and back of the will, lie motives, and the same motives affect different men differently. Back of motives, lies a spirit, a disposition, the fountain-head whence the life-stream flows; and the radical gospel of Jesus Christ says, Go to the fountain-head; plant in the heart a new spirit, and the result will be new principles, new motives, a changed will, a changed life. As you transform a tree by inserting into it a living scion from another tree, so does God graft the heart with a new spirit, a living principle from his own heart, a scion from the tree of life; and presently the man is a new man, the life a new life. God opens his heart and in the person of his Son pours out his life-blood that we may live thereby. He offers himself to us, saying, This is my body, eat it; this represents my blood, drink it all; in expressive symbol and token of the great central, vital

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truth, that he is the life of our life, that we live in him and upon him, thus becoming partakers of the divine nature."

The first statement, that "God's gift" to man is eternal life, passes unchallenged. But the next, that "sin is death," is, I think, wholly untenable. Jas. 1 : 15 says, "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." The illustration is drawn from a natural birth; death is represented as the offspring of sin, and unless this child and the parent are one and the same person, death, and sin which brings forth death, cannot be one and the same thing. For a fuller consideration of this point see chapter 4, page 28. But the definition goes on to say, "unchecked, unremedied, unpardoned, it ultimates in the destruction of the moral nature." The apostle James, as quoted above, says, "Sin, when it *is finished*, bringeth forth death," but with the above definition, sin never is finished. The sinner, "unchecked, unremedied, unpardoned," goes on endlessly in sin and never arrives at that point where his sin can be said to be finished and the destruction of his moral nature effected. "How shall man be saved from sin?" God answers, "Give him a fresh gift of life." "As the Chicago River was cured of its foulness by pouring Lake Michigan through it, so is man rescued from depravity and ruin by a fresh impartation of life from God." It appears to me that here cause is put for result. The uniform teaching of Scripture, I believe, is that men must turn away *from sin*, and *towards God*, before he will bestow upon them eternal life; and not that this is bestowed *to produce* such a turning. In Matt. 19 : 16, the young man who would obtain

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eternal life, is told by our Lord to come into harmony with the law of God, and then he might hope for the gift; and in the 29th verse, eternal life is represented as being bestowed only upon such as have shown a fitness for it, and not as the agency to produce that fitness. In Matt. 25 : 46, it is the *already righteous* that enter into life eternal, and the eternal life does not appear to have been in the least degree the producing cause of their righteousness. In Luke 10 : 27, the lawyer who asked how he could obtain eternal life, was told by our Lord to love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself; virtually he was to leave off all sinful habits and affections, and when this was done he should receive the coveted boon. But eternal life was not given to help him gain this freedom from sin, for he would be well on the road to holiness before he could expect the fulfillment of the promise. In John 10 : 27, 28, Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, ... and I give unto them eternal life." He gives it to those already his followers, not that they may become so. John 12 : 25, "He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." It is right relations towards God that result in eternal life, and not these that produce these relations. Rom. 2 : 7, "To them who by *patient continuance in well doing* seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life." These recipients of the gift have been a long time patiently and continuously striving against sin, but it does not appear as if they had been assisted in this strife by eternal life, but rather that this is the outcome of the conflict. Rom. 6 : 22: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have

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your fruit unto holiness, and the *end* everlasting life." The apostle certainly teaches, as do all of these passages quoted (and the Bible is full of similar ones), that eternal life is the end or outcome of holiness, and not the means of its attainment. It seems to be needless to go farther in this direction.

My brother asks, "What is life?" and answers, "It consists in actions, conduct." But is this so? Are actions, conduct—life? The most that can be rightly claimed for these, to my mind, is that they evince the possession of life by the being in whom they are seen; but to say that these visible manifestations of life are life itself, is confounding visible things with invisible; the known with the unknown; the sun with the verdure with which its light and warmth cover the field and forest. But to proceed. "But back of conduct, lies the will; and back of the will, lie motives." I know very well that I have no business to venture my little canoe on the wide ocean of metaphysics, and shall attempt nothing so rash; but I think I risk nothing in asserting that *will* and *motive* are entirely separate and radically distinct from the life which makes the exercise of the will and the operation of motives possible. But again. "Back of motive, lies a spirit, a disposition, the fountain-head from whence the life-stream flows." Here, again, I am at variance with my brother, for the Bible teaches me that God alone is the Fountain-head of all life. John 5 : 40, which reads, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life," and Ps. 36 : 9, "For with me is the fountain of life," should be enough to settle this point.

And further, "The radical Gospel of Jesus Christ

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says, Go to the fountain-head. . . . . Plant in the heart a new spirit." I may be very dull of comprehension, but to my mind the subject is getting very much mixed. First, "The spirit was the fountain-head from which the life-stream flowed." Now it is the heart that is the fountain-head, and the life is two removes from God: First, the life finding its fountain-head in the spirit or disposition; then the heart the abode of the spirit. Where does the life touch the Eternal Word, who says of himself, "I am the Life."

But when this new spirit or disposition is implanted in the heart, "the result will be new principles, new motives, a changed will, a changed life." This all seems to me to read backward if the earlier part of this definition is correct; for there the foul stream of man's polluted nature was to be cured and rescued from ruin and depravity by the fresh impartation of life from God; but here the life comes in, as I have claimed it should, at the *end*, as the outcome; or, as my brother says, "the result of new principles, new motives, a changed will." But in continuation, "As you transform a tree by inserting into it a living scion from another tree, so does God graft the heart with a new spirit, a living principle from his own heart, a scion from the tree of life; and presently the man is a new man, the life a new life; God opens his heart, and, in the person of his Son, pours out his life-blood that we may live thereby. He offers himself to us, saying, This is my body, eat it; this represents my blood, drink it all, in expressive symbol and token of the great central, vital truth, that he is the life of our life, that we live in him, and upon him, thus becoming partakers of the divine nature."

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I must say that, though the language is all in accord with what is constantly heard from the pulpit, when I attempt to analyze it, and bring it to the test of Scripture, it is not intelligible, and conveys no clear, definite impression, to my mind. I cannot see, from the teaching of the Bible, how eternal life is any factor in producing holiness in men; for this is the specific work of the Holy Spirit upon all who, accepting Jesus Christ as a Saviour, are made partakers of the benefits of his mediation; first, in forgiveness of sin and justification before God, then of the indwelling, renewing, comforting presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the resurrection of the body, and the end, everlasting life. It seems to me that my definition is simple, where the other is involved; clear, where that is obscure; scriptural, where that is not so; and definite and intelligible, where that is vague and incomprehensible.

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CHAPTER V.

AS confirming the correctness of our definition of life let us look at Heb. 7:23. The writer says that under the Levitical economy there must of necessity have been a succession of priests, because one after another these died, leaving their office vacant, until it was filled by a new man. But Jesus, "Because he *abideth forever* hath an unchangeable priesthood," and in the next verse we learn that his ability to save completely those who put their trust in him, rests upon the fact that he *lives forever.* In the sixteenth verse the radical difference pointed out as existing between the Aaronic priesthood and that of Jesus, is that the former was according to the law of a carnal commandment, the other according to the power of an *endless life.* The living forever of verse 25, and the endless life of verse 16, which so distinguish our Great High Priest, have no reference to his moral nature or to the conditions by which he is environed, but to the fact that he possesses in himself a life which is unending.

If this is the character of the life of our Lord, why should it be supposed or said that the eternal life derived from him should not be of the same character? And when, as in John 3:16, he says that believers in him

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should never perish, but have eternal life, and in John 10:28, "and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish," why should not the language be accepted in its ordinary straightforward meaning? Isaiah 55:3 says: "Hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." If for the soul to live, is to be in a condition of beatific holiness, where is the need of any further covenanted good? All that it can possess or enjoy of good is already secured, and it can have neither need nor capacity for more. But God says here, "Your soul shall live *and* I will make an everlasting covenant with you." The life promised is evidently one thing and the covenanted mercies are something super-added to the life; for the two are spoken of as distinct.

It seems to me that it has been shown from the Bible that the life which is given to men by Jesus Christ, and which he says is eternal in duration, does not consist in any relation which man sustains towards God, nor in the conditions or surroundings growing out of such relation, but rather in the conferring of a principle which insures perpetuity of being to the regenerated man. If my former proposition is correct that death is the contrary of life, the Bible, if it is to support me in my definition, should represent death not as a condition under which life is continued, but as the extinction of life. Incidentally we have examined this question partially, but a more extended and careful consideration is necessary for a satisfactory answer, and I pray that the reader may come to the investigation with all prejudices laid aside, and with a sincere desire to know the truth.

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Our religious teachers tell us that frequently, indeed, generally, as used in the Bible, the term death is to be qualified by the adjective "spiritual," understood as added or prefixed. The definition given to the term thus amended will be found on page 23, chapter 2, and page 37, chapter 4, and it is unnecessary to repeat it, but it seems to me just as incorrect to say that such relations towards God are death, as it would be to say that disloyalty to an earthly sovereign, or open rebellion against him is physical death.

In all civilized countries I think actual treason has death for its penalty, but the treasonable condition of a man's mind and the plotting with his fellow conspirators cannot with the least propriety be styled death. Under the government of God, disloyalty towards him and the withholding from him on the part of man of that full allegiance which he justly demands, has death affixed to it as its penalty; but to say that this state of disloyalty and rebellion, called in the Bible sin, is death, is as incorrect and unwarrantable as would be the calling of the treasonable conduct of a subject of a human government, death. There is another sense in which death is used by our religious teachers of the day, interchangably with destruction, either term being, in the sense used, as unscriptural as the one above called spiritual death. This other death, or destruction, is a state of intolerable but unmitigated suffering, which the finally impenitent are doomed to undergo as the penalty denounced against transgression. But this condition of unrest, of ungratified desire, of hopeless despair, and inextinguishable hatred to all good, is no more death, or

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destruction, than are the adverse and painful circumstances that afflict men in this world the death or destruction of the body. A man may suffer excruciating pain he may be bereaved and sorrow stricken, he may be poor and friendless; but all of these, or any other conceivable surroundings or conditions, cannot, with any propriety, be called death or destruction. Neither, on the other hand, can any condition of rank, or power, or wealth, or happiness. be called the life of the possessor, though in some cases they may prolong or shorten it, or make it more or less enjoyable.

Our Lord draws very clearly and unmistakably the line between the life, and those things which modify the conditions of a living being. In Mark 8:36, he asks, What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? The loss of his life takes from him every opportunity for enjoying the pleasure which, had he lived, he might have derived from the possession of every source of earthly good. The thought is the same as we find in Luke 12:15: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." And the original of this word "consisteth," it seems to me, might with greater propriety be rendered "is" (a man's life *is* not, etc.), as it is in other places in both the authorized and revised versions. It is worthy of note that the Greek word translated life, is *zōē*, the same that is invariably used with the adjective when eternal life is the theme; but that in the twenty-second and twenty-third verses an entirely different Greek word is found, which is never used except in connection with the physical stage of being. These quotations from the

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sayings of our Lord, show that the world, with all of material good with which it can surround a man, is one thing, and the life is another, and entirely different thing. If, then, this mortal life (*psuche*), is something wholly distinct from the conditions under which it is maintained, why should not the eternal life (*zōē*), be something just as distinct from the conditions under which it is maintained?

Let us now turn to the Old Testament and see if it can afford us any light upon the meaning of the word. The penalty pronounced by the Creator against transgression, was death. "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." What significance the language may have had to Adam, we cannot tell. He must instinctively have shrunk from the experience indicated, because God had affixed it as a punishment for disobedience, though, possibly, he may no more have understood the full import of the warning than would a little child who had never seen or heard of death. But whatever uncertainty exists in our minds regarding the meaning of the word to Adam, it does not appear that there need be any doubt as to what it meant to those who came after him, down to the time when the Sun of Righteousness gave at least a twilight glow to the previous obscurity, and illumined somewhat the darkness of the grave.

The recorded sayings of Job, David, and Hezekiah will give us a very clear idea of what death meant to them, and these we will now take up. From the way in which the Old Testament writers speak of physical death, it is plain that they regarded it as

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resulting differently to different persons. For such as left this world in the favor of God, it was a change for the better in all cases; and to the tried and afflicted, and sorrowful, if they were in covenant relations with God, it was a blessed release from present evils, and the entrance upon a happier and an enduring stage of being. In Ps. 16:10, David, speaking of the result of physical dissolution to him, says, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore," and in Ps. 17:15, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

To take, first, the testimony of Job. In the tenth chapter of the book bearing his name, we find the patriarch apparently less distressed by his bodily sufferings, great as they were, than by his inability to understand why God had sent them upon him; and the chapter seems, more than anything else, like a communing with himself, seeking some clue to lead him out of the darkness. It cannot be, he says, that God is trying me, to discover what may be hidden in my character, for this is needless for him who himself made me in all my parts, and has that perfect knowledge of me which the maker must possess regarding the work of his own hands, which same thought David very beautifully expresses in the one hundred and thirty-ninth psalm. His meditations seem to bring him no light, and the gloom deepens around him, as he concludes that God sees sins in him of which he is unconscious, and for these is cutting short his days. He is sure that if this is so, and he

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dies under the displeasure of God, that he could hope for nothing afterward but the reward of the wicked. That he understood this to be extinction, or destruction, is plain from the feelings expressed in verses 18 to 20, and in other passages; for had Job expected an eternal existence beyond the grave in the enjoyment of God's favor, he could not have indulged in such a hopeless train of thought, nor have given way to such desperate suggestions on account of the short period of suffering he had to endure, bitter though it was.

Others, since his day, have suffered all of physical pain that could be inflicted through the ingenuity of man, prompted by the powers of darkness, and been upheld by the thought that the way through the flames was short, and the end perfect and enduring peace and blessedness. Nor had the friends of Job expected for him eternal bliss beyond the grave, can it be imagined that they would not have pointed it out to him, as the chief source of his hope and support? But nowhere do they allude to it. On the other hand, had Job supposed *sheol* was the ante-chamber to an eternity of misery, he would not have been so ready to pass within its portals. The fool, who says there is no God nor hereafter, may, by his own rash act, terminate his earthly existence; but not so he who anticipates unending, insupportable anguish. Job, thinking that his hope of acceptance with God as righteous was cut off, and judgment given against him as a sinner for some reason unperceived by himself, earnestly desires cessation of his present misery, not in the still greater misery of the unending fires of God's punitive wrath, but in the silence and

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darkness of extinction in *sheol*. "Cease, then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death." Verses 20 and 21 could not have been spoken by one looking forward to the future life as one of supreme, unending felicity, neither are they the utterances of one who, beyond the grave, expected to enter upon a state of unending suffering; but only of a man who, possessed of the idea contained in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses, expected in the grave to find only a negative good; release in utter extinction from both present suffering and future misery. The fourteenth chapter affords further proof respecting the belief of Job in relation to a future state. In verses 7 and 9, he says: For a tree that is cut down there is hope that under favorable circumstances it may sprout again and grow, and in verses 10 and 12 speaks of the dead in contrast with this as without any such hope. "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" plainly implying that he is *not*. "Till the heavens be no more they shall not awake out of their sleep." Most read this verse, "Man lieth down and riseth not till the heavens be no more, when he shall awake," as if Job had been familiar with the third chapter of 2 Peter, and was looking for the second coming of our Lord without sin unto salvation, to destroy the world and create a new heavens and a new earth wherein should dwell righteousness. Very far from this appears to me the thought of Job. To him and his contemporaries, the visible heavens were the types of permanence and immutability.

Year after year, generation after generation had

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come and gone since the heavens first told of the glory of God, and the firmament showed his handy-work, and still they remained unchanged, the evidence of the wisdom and power of their Creator, the symbol of his own eternity; and to endure as long as the sun and moon, or the heavens, is, in the sacred writings, equivalent to an endless duration. The psalmist says in Ps. 72:17: "His name shall *endure forever*, his name shall continue as long as the sun." And in Ps. 89:29: "His seed will I make to *endure forever*, and his throne as the days of heaven;" and in verses 36 and 37: "His seed shall *endure forever*, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever, as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." From these examples it seems clear that Job, instead of anticipating the time when the heavens should be no more, and simultaneous with this dissolution the dead should be raised, had the very contrary idea in his mind, viz.: that the heavens would continue forever, as would the state of the *unforgiven* dead, as described in verse 12. It is not of all men that Job says this, for in verse 13 he asks God to exempt him from the fate of such, and that to him might be allotted a temporary abode in the grave, and a time fixed by God for his redemption from its power. This entire book of Job, attentively studied, conveys the idea that all the speakers, while they expected a life beyond the grave for those who left this world in the favor of God, assume that for all of the opposite class there was reserved only complete extinction.

In the sixth psalm and fifth verse, David echoes the thoughts of Job which we have been considering.

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David had been brought very low by sickness, which he looked upon as sent by God in token of his displeasure, which is evident from the first verse; and the teachings of Moses in the twenty-eighth and thirtieth chapters of Deuteronomy, fully warranted him in so interpreting the infliction. His prayer is that the sin for which the punishment is sent may be forgiven, and that in token of this forgiveness, his disease may be healed; otherwise, should he remain unpardoned, and his death result as a mark of the divine displeasure, he would experience the award of all who depart this life under the wrath of God; and this was extinction. Upon no other explanation can we account for such sentiments as are found in the fifth verse. To the righteous dead, David well knew that beyond the grave there was a future wholly at variance with the darkness, and silence, and forgetfulness of God depicted here. In Psalm 17:15, when the cloud had been withdrawn, and the light of God's favor shone upon him, he says, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness;" and in Ps. 23:4, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil." When David wrote this he did not expect to remain forever in the silence, and darkness, and inaction of the grave; he expected to go *through* the valley, and emerge in green pastures on the other side. But the Lord is his shepherd now, and his favor is resting upon him; and in the one hundred and third psalm he apostrophizes his soul as having its life redeemed from destruction by the goodness of God. The condition of mind in which this sixth psalm was written, seems referred to in the eighth and ninth verses

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of the thirtieth psalm, and the result of God's forgiveness and restoring him to health, was that he might sing praises, and *not be silent.* Psalm 119:175 says: "*Let my soul live*, and it shall praise thee."

In addition to the testimony of Job and David upon this point, we have, also, that of Hezekiah, in the 38th chapter of Isaiah. The king had been so sick that he expected to die, and in the tenth verse he says, "In the cutting off of my days I shall go to the gates of *sheol;* I am deprived of the residue of my years." His thoughts seem to have been, In my prime I am consigned to the grave, and am not permitted to attain to the long life promised those who enjoy the favor of God. This is conclusive proof that God is angry with me, for his promise to those who fear him, is, that their days shall be prolonged. Psalm 91:16 says of such, "with long life will I satisfy him," and Prov. 10:27, "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. Job 15:20 reads: "The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and to the oppressor the number of his years are hidden," *i. e.*, he has no security regarding his life, it is likely to be cut off at any moment, and in verse 32, "he shall come to an end before his time, and his branch shall not be green," *i. e.*, it shall wither. The whole teaching of Deuteronomy is that if the people feared and obeyed God, he would be gracious and bless them in all ways, and especially with length of days. "I call heaven and earth to witness," says Moses, "that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life that both thou and thy seed may live. That thou

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mayest love the Lord thy God and that thou mayest cleave unto him, for he is thy life, and the length of thy days." Deut. 30:19, 20. With such a record of God's attitude toward the transgressor, and with the consciousness of his own short comings as these appear in 2 Chron. 32:25, Hezekiah drew the legitimate conclusion that he was being cut off in judgment, which would consign him to *sheol* as an eternal prison-house. Not only would his eyes close upon the inhabitants of this world, but they would never open in that deathless world, that true land of the living where he had hoped to see the King in his beauty.

If Job, David, and Hezekiah are to be taken as exponents of the belief of their times regarding the future state, we must conclude that the generally accepted doctrine was that the favor of God insured a prolonged life, and that to be cut off in one's prime was a mark of God's displeasure, which left no place for repentance, but was only the prelude to death in its radical sense. Job 7:21; Eze. 33:10.

We cannot leave this part of our field without considering the eighty-eighth psalm, which in sentiment is closely related to the passage from Isaiah just before us, and to the sixth psalm. The writer, in verse 5, speaks of the wicked cut off for their sins as no more remembered by God; and in verses 10, 11, 12, says, "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" We cannot think that Job, David,

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and Hezekiah meant to convey the idea that a man enjoying the favor of God, and so undergoing physical dissolution, lost all memory of God or ceased to praise him, or passed into any state in the least analogous to this; for this is contrary to the whole teaching of the Bible, not only of the New Testament, but of the Old as well. Such as felt conscious of the approval of God, looked for anything rather than forgetfulness of him, or silence as regarded his praise, at the termination of this mortal life.

How then are we to understand these passages from these writers which we have been examining, and especially this eighty-eighth psalm? The only explanation satisfactory to my mind is, that the accepted doctrine of those ages was that temporal death experienced by the wicked, handed them over hopelessly to the power of the second death, which, being the termination of conscious existence, would make perfectly applicable all the foregoing quotations, and many other passages not quoted, which upon any other ground seem wholly unintelligible.

We must not forget that while our Lord, as recorded in Mark 12:26, 27, found the doctrine of a future life for the *pious dead** in Ex. 3:6, he deduces from the passage nothing respecting the future of the wicked, leaving this question untouched. As regards this, our knowledge is derived from sources to which Old Testament believers had no access; and their belief, it seems

* Because Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were living, it cannot be asserted that Cain, Korah, and Ahab, *id genus omne*, also were living.

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certain to me, was, that while beyond the grave there was a future for the friends of God; for his enemies, *sheol* was a place of inaction and unconsciousness; a land of darkness (Job 10: 21), of silence (Ps. 115: 17), of forgetfulness (Ps. 88: 12), *forgotten even of God* (Ps. 88: 5). Can language convey the idea of utter destruction and extinction, if this fails to do so?

The forty-ninth psalm is so confirmatory of the above conclusion, and shows so clearly the difference between the future of the righteous and the wicked, that I wish to call attention to it in this place. Verses 6 and 9 show that no possible influence of man can preserve one of the race from death, or redeem him from its power when once within its dominions. With all his honor resting upon him as the head of the earthly creation, man "abideth not," does not continue, but, like the beasts—his inferiors and subjects—perishes. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave," it being the habitation of them all.

For the wicked there is no redemption—they perish like the beast. But note the difference in the case of the righteous: "*God shall redeem my soul* from the power of the grave." This is his only hope of escape from the grasp of death. If not rescued by God he expected to perish. Now for the wicked there was no such hope; the redemption of their souls had forever ceased when in impiety and unreconciled to God they had gone down into the dominions of death; and as none but God could redeem them, and as they, being his enemies, could not expect his interposition, there was no possibility of their redemption. "They shall go to the generation of their fathers; they shall never see light."

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I do not see how the truth that a wicked man dying in his sins ultimately perishes as completely as does the beast, can be expressed in language plainer or less liable to misunderstanding than in the twentieth verse. To use more words would to me appear as mere verbiage. "Man that is in honor and understandeth not, is like the beasts that cease to be."* With a very brief consideration of Eze. 33:10, we will leave this part of our investigation. "If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live."

In the twenty-third verse of chapter 33, the prophet had told them that the judgments of God should be visited upon them, and "they should pine away for their iniquities;" and when later he seeks to encourage them to walk in better paths, they reply in effect, "Why should we attempt it? you say that we are doomed to pine away under the displeasure of God, and if this is so, we can have no hope of a future life." That the life referred to is that of the world to come, and not this mortal life, is plainly seen by the verses before and following. The very fact of physical death, sent upon them in such a way, was to them conclusive that once in *sheol* God would no more remember them; and their hope of escape from that land of silence and darkness where are the slain whom God had erased from the tablets of his memory, was utterly cut off.

* The Hebrew *damah*, translated "perish" in verse 20, means "to cease," "to be cut off."

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CHAPTER VI.

THE figurative and metaphorical expressions of the sacred writers all agree with the foregoing definition of death, and with no other. The simile more generally used than any other to illustrate the dealings of God with the wicked, is the action of fire upon material objects. In Deut. 4:24 Moses tells the people that the Lord is a "consuming fire." The only other relation he is represented as holding, to men, under this figure is this of a refiner's fire, and this is only towards his redeemed ones. Mal. 3:2, 3. Nowhere is he represented as a withering, scorching fire, inflicting pain while leaving the object of its assault intact and in being, though damaged and disfigured. The invariable announcement is that he will *consume* his enemies. As the fat of rams, when subjected to the action of material fire, becomes dissipated in smoke and passes away, so in the day of the revelation of the wrath of God against all unrighteousness the wicked shall perish and be no more. This is the purport of Ps. 37:20. Malachi is still more explicit, and says the coming of the Lord shall burn up the wicked *root and branch.* It seems strange to me that any one should claim that the consuming fires of the divine presence here spoken of will merely affect the happiness of those who come under

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their power. If words can be made to convey the idea of entire, irretrievable consumption and extinction, then these certainly do. To take a field filled with bushes and stubble, and subject it to the action of material fire till every vestige of vegetation is destroyed root and branch, can be used as an illustration of nothing less than the utter extinction of the wicked, who stand in the same relation to the fires of God's holiness that the stubble does to the fires of earth. If this merely plays about the bushes, scorching and defacing the freshness and beauty of their appearance, but leaving them still possessed of life and being, then may the fires of the

The Hebrew word here in Ps. 37:20, translated perish, is *abad*, and primarily means to be lost, and is sometimes so translated, for instance, in 1 Sam. 9:3, 20, and in two or three other places, but in the great majority of instances the connection will not permit of this rendering, the idea from the context being that the being or thing alluded to is killed or destroyed. Num. 16:33 says that Korah and his company were swallowed up in the earth and perished. Job 3:3, "Let the day perish wherein I was born." Ps. 37:20, "The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be like the fat of rams." Ps. 102:26, "They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure." Jonah 4:10, it "came in a night, and perished in a night." These are a few out of nearly 100 texts where the Hebrew word *abad* cannot be translated by the English word "lost," and preserve the meaning of the passage, the English word "destroyed" or "perished" being the nearest equivalent that can be found, and in something like sixty places it is translated "destroyed," as in Lev. 23:30, Num. 33:52, 2 Kings 11:1, Esther 9:6, Ps. 5:6, 9:5, Jer. 12:17. Once in Psalm 49, in verse 10, we have *abad* translated "perish," but in verses 12 and 20 "perish" is represented in the original by the Hebrew word *damah*, meaning "to be cut off," "to cease." The Hebrew word *kalah*, translated "consumed" in the 20th verse of the 37th Psalm, is very strong, and means "to be finished" or "brought to an end." 1 Sam. 3:12, "make an end," 2 Chr. 20, 23, and many others. It also is translated consume about forty times, as in Ex. 32:10, Num. 16:21, 2 Kings 13:19, Eze. 20:13.

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Judgment similarly affect the finally impenitent. But if, on the contrary, the literal fire when most intense follows the roots beneath the surface, and destroys the very sources of life, so the eternal fires of God's holiness and hatred of sin shall feed upon and consume all those who at the day of trial are not partakers of eternal, indestructible life, through the acceptance of the offices of Jesus Christ.

Referring to the quality ascribed to God by Moses at the beginning of this chapter, we find that the Hebrew word translated "consume" in this verse (Deut. 4:24) is *akal;* and the same word is found in Judges 6:21; 1 Kings 18:38; 2 Kings 1:10, 12; Job 31:12. In all these places it can mean only the devouring or obliterating of the object affected. The same word *akal* is used in Isaiah 5:24, and is translated devoureth, and again in Joel 2:5, also 2 Kings 1:14, where Elijah called for fire from heaven and it burned up the men sent to take him, *akal* is the original of "burned up." In more than one hundred and fifty places, this word occurs in the Old Testament, and in but two or three can it mean anything else than the devouring or obliterating of the object acted upon. There are a variety of words in the Hebrew vocabulary to express prolonged suffering, crushing sorrow, trouble, and wasting away, had the Holy Spirit intended to teach that misery or suffering were to be the portion of the wicked, instead of destruction, as, for instance, the following: *ed, kid, mehuma, mechitta, pid, shad, ashem, shoa, shamem,* meaning, respectively, in the order named, "calamity," "misfortune," "trouble," "downfall," "ruin," "spoiling," "to make desolate." None of these,

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however, so far as I can find, are used in connection with the final doom of the enemies of God. Neither pain, suffering, distress, anguish, sorrow, misfortune, misery, or affliction, though often used in the Old Testament in relation to other things, are any of them, so far as I can learn, ever applied to the condition of the finally condemned; but the idea of their condition is sought to be conveyed by such words as *akal*, to devour (see previous reference), *kalah*, to be consumed, Ps. 37 : 20 (see note, page 61), *abad*, to perish or to be destroyed (see same reference), and *shakhath*, destruction, Ps. 55 : 23; 103 : 4.

To turn now from the Old Testament to the New, from the last chapter of the last book of the former to the third of the first of the latter, we find in Matt. 3 : 11, 12, a repetition of the thought we have just had before us. John the Baptist says of Jesus Christ that "he shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire," that "he will thoroughly purge his floor and gather the wheat into his garner, but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." I understand that here, as in Malachi 3 : 2, 3 and 4 : 1, there are two distinct offices attached to the person of the Messiah. Mal. 3 : 3, he sits as a refiner of silver to purge away all the dross from his chosen ones, and in 4 : 1 as a consuming fire to consume and exterminate all who oppose themselves. Here in Matthew the baptism of the Holy Ghost corresponds with Mal. 3 : 3, and the baptism of fire with Mal. 4 : 1. The effect in both Malachi and Matthew is the same, the sanctification of his people, the consumption of his enemies. I am aware that the

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baptism of fire, Matt. 3 : 11, is generally referred to Acts 2 : 3 as its fulfillment, but this appears unwarranted and foreign to the meaning.

Mark and John, though both speak of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, say nothing about that of fire; but Matthew and Luke speak of both, and alike connect with the prediction the separation of the wheat from the chaff and the burning up of the latter. There was no such separation and burning up at Pentecost; and it should be observed that the prediction is that Jesus shall baptize *with fire*, while Acts 2 : 3 says that the pentecostal baptism was of "*cloven tongues like* as of fire," *i. e.*, the tongues representing the miraculous gift of speaking in languages never learned, were cloven, like the forked, darting flame, typical of the multiplicity of languages those thus endowed should be able to speak. As the flame at its base is one, but as it ascends divides into several parts, so these symbolic tongues given to the apostles by which they were to witness for Jesus, were, towards their ends, divided like flames of fire. Matt. 3 : 11 says he shall baptize you *with fire*, not with something *like as to fire*. It is worthy of note just here that the apostles do not refer this gift of tongues to the predicted baptism of fire, but to that of the Holy Ghost promised in Joel 2: 29; and this was to precede and is entirely distinct from that great and terrible day spoken of by the Baptist in verse 12, when the Son of man shall come in power to gather in his elect and consign his enemies to the consuming effects of everlasting fire. The fact that Peter in his sermon made no reference to Matt. 3 : 12, but passed over that in silence, and found

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in Joel the prediction that was then being fulfilled, is sufficient to show that in the mind of these inspired apostles there was no connection between the baptism of fire of Matt. 3 : 11 and the tongues like as of fire that sat upon them at Pentecost. In Acts 10 : 44, 46 the gift of tongues to the believers of the household of Cornelius was recognized by Peter, in chapter 11 : 16, as the baptism of the Holy Ghost predicted by John the Baptist, and he says it was the same that they received "at the beginning," which must mean at Pentecost.

The baptism of fire as it affects the wicked can be seen in the parable of the tares and the wheat (Matt. 13: 24, 40), and from the explanation which our Lord himself gives to it, there does not seem any room for misapprehension regarding the language here used by him. He says in the parable, in the thirtieth verse, that at the harvest he will instruct the reapers to gather the tares in bundles and burn them; and in verse 40, in explaining the parable to the twelve in private, says, "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be with the wicked at the termination of this dispensation; they shall be separated from the righteous and consigned to the flames." When a gardener has gathered from his ground a quantity of noxious weeds, and as the most effectual mode of destroying them, and leaving no germ for their reproduction, kindles a fire and burns them up, what is his purpose in the act? Surely his purpose is to destroy them utterly, and this is what our Lord says shall be done to the finally impenitent. At one time the Canada thistle caused great annoyance in my garden; even when pulled up by the

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roots, if allowed to remain on the ground, the seed would mature and perpetuate the plant, so that later I had them pulled up by the roots, and at once put in the fire. Did they remain intact though a little scorched and shriveled? Did I expect this would be the case? Most certainly not. I expected they would be burned up root and seed, and I was not disappointed. This is just what any one would look for under the circumstances; and when our Lord told his disciples that as the fires of earth consumed and burned up the tares, *so* the fires of the Judgment day should affect the wicked, he must have intended them to understand that this was to be the end of them; not instantaneous, perhaps, for it takes a little time to burn up green weeds, but ultimately the effect of the fire would be to consume and destroy those who were cast into it.

If it is permissible to say, "As therefore the tares are consumed by the fire, so it shall *not* be with the wicked at the end of the world, for they shall be cast into the fire but shall *not* be consumed," then it would seem as if one might, at his own pleasure or whim, prove anything he chooses from the Bible. The Greek word translated "burn," both in verses 30 and 40, is *katakaio* and means to burn down; we find it in Acts 19:19, where the magicians "brought their books together and burned them." It is also found in Rev. 18:8, where it is used in relation to the mystical Babylon, and there is translated both in the authorized and revised versions as "utterly burned," and any one who will read the full description cannot avoid the conclusion that the destruction is to be complete and enduring, for verse 21 says, "She

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shall be found no more at all." How can entire obliteration be more emphatically expressed? If *katakaio* means this here, why should it not be taken to mean the same in Matt. 3 : 12 and 13 : 30, 40 and Luke 3 : 17? So far as I can find, there is in the Bible no allusion to any custom among the Jews of the use of fire as a means of inflicting torture upon enemies or criminals condemned to punishment, neither did the nations about them so employ it; and when, in their scriptures or in the mouths of their prophets, the action of fire is referred to in connection with the enemies of God, it could in the mind of a Jew have had but one association, and that was with their utter, complete, irremediable destruction.

We read in the third of Daniel that when the three young men were, by order of the king, cast into the furnace, it was not for the purpose of inflicting suffering, but to put an end to their lives. And that this was not the effect is ascribed by the king only to the interposition of a wonder-working God, who appeared for the deliverance of his servants. Who, then, is to interpose between the fires of the bottomless pit and those who are exposed to their consuming flames? Most surely not he who walked amid the fires with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and "he is the only one who can deliver after this sort." Mark 9 : 43, 48 is another passage direct from the lips of our Lord, which, though often quoted as an argument against the destruction of the wicked, appears to me entirely misapplied. The illustration is taken from the Valley of Hinnom, where all the refuse from the temple was taken and burned,

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and anything that by chance escaped the fire fell a prey to the worms that were bred in the filth and pollution of the place. Our Lord appears to quote from, or at least refer to, Isaiah 66:24 where the prophet says, "They shall . . . look upon the carcasses of the transgressors, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." These are the *carcasses* of men, not living, sentient beings. It appears to me that *Gehenna*, typified by the Valley of Hinnom, and to which our Lord here assigns the transgressors, offers absolutely no hope for its inmates. There might be a bare possibility that, through the neglect of the watchers the material fires in the Valley of Hinnom would go out from lack of fuel; through some possible chance, the worms that fed upon its festering heaps might become extinct; but the fires of God's holiness, their consuming effect upon everything sinful when brought under their influence, could never cease to operate, for they are as eternal and unchangeable as himself. Where, then, is there the least possibility of escape for those exposed to their power?

This passage, it seems to me, is often, in fact generally, misinterpreted by those who quote it in support of the doctrine of the endless misery and suffering of the wicked. They explain and enforce it as if our Lord had said, "Those who are consigned to this fearful place shall never die; their vital forces shall never suffer diminution, but, as exhausted by the fire and worm, shall be constantly renewed, that they may be capable of resisting still further drains;" whereas, he says no such thing. And the undying qualities spoken of have no reference

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to the wicked themselves, but apply wholly to those forces which are at work for their destruction. Jude 7 is a parallel passage. The cities of the plain are said to be "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." The forces employed by God for the destruction of these cities are eternal, but it does not follow that the cities were able to resist the destructive effects of these eternal forces; the exact contrary was the case, and they succumbed at once. The instrumentalities employed by God may be eternal, but the material which came under their operation was perishable. So the typical fire and worm of *Gehenna* are eternal, but the wicked who shall be handed over to their assaults are perishable.

In Matt. 10:28 our Lord says that God is able to destroy both soul and body in *Gehenna*, for this is the word translated hell, in both places. This is fully in accord with his word in Mark 9:43, 48 which we have just been studying. The true scope of this language, it seems to me, is lost sight of, and an erroneous conclusion drawn from this passage quite as often, and with a result equally far from the truth. Our Lord does not say that God is able to destroy the happiness, or symmetry, or moral beauty of the soul in *Gehenna;* he does not mention these or any other attribute or quality pertaining to the soul of man that he is able to destroy, but the entire man, body and soul, with all that pertains to them. When our religious teachers tell us that the language used by the Great Teacher is not to be understood in its plain, most apparent meaning, they should be able to show us from some authority equal with his, that he is speaking figuratively or enigmatically, in neither of which senses can his

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language here or in Luke 12 : 5 or 21 : 14, 18 be taken; for in all these places he is using the simplest, most direct form of speech to impress upon his disciples the duty and privilege of committing themselves to the care of God, whose purposes of love no power of earth or hell could frustrate.

Instead of finding in the Scriptures anything to warrant us in attaching to these teachings of our Lord any meaning other than that most apparent upon their surface, the whole tenor of the Bible is just to the contrary. 2 Thess. 1 : 9 is one instance of this. Speaking of those who are transgressors of God's law, Paul says, "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." The New Version reads, "Who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord." The writer says the cause of this destruction is "the presence of the Lord." Mal. 3 : 2 asks: "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire. Ex. 24 : 17 says, "And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire." Deut. 9 : 3: "The Lord thy God is he that goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire shall he destroy. Ps. 97 : 3: "A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies." Isa. 10 : 17: "And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame." Isa. 66: 15: "For behold the Lord will come with fire . . . to render his anger with fury and his rebukes with flames of fire, for by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh." The consuming, destroying effect

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of the presence of God upon all sin, is everywhere taught in the Bible, of which the foregoing are a few examples. Nowhere is his presence represented as producing protracted suffering, but invariably destruction. (See Gen. 32:30; Ex. 33:20; Deut. 5:25; Judges 13:22.)

The context in this first chapter of 2 Thessalonians teaches that the same glorious presence which causes the destruction of his enemies, brings "rest" and "admiring joy" to his redeemed ones. This agrees with Isa. 33:14, 15: "Only he that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hand from holding of bribes, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil," can hope to dwell amid the fires of God's holy presence. In Acts 3:19 we find this same expression, "from the presence of the Lord," and there Peter speaks of it as bringing times of refreshing," which corresponds to the rest and abounding joy of 2 Thessalonians, which is the result of his presence to his people, though in the twenty-third verse Peter says all of the opposite class shall be destroyed. In 2 Thessalonians Paul does not say they shall be destroyed with eternal punishment through banishment from the presence of the Lord, though the verse is often, if not generally quoted and used as if he did. The Greek *apo* here rendered "from" also means "with." (See Luke 14:8–15; 16:16, 21.) It is also translated "by," in Matthew 7:16; Acts 9:13; 12:20; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:13; Heb. 5:8; and in Acts 3:19, quoted above, it seems as if it can mean nothing else. For some reason, probably sufficient to themselves, the authors of the New Version have departed from their rule

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of rendering the same word in Greek by the same word in English, and in Acts 3 : 19 translate *prosopon*, "presence;" while in 2 Thess. 1 : 19 they translate it "face." The plain assertion of the passage in Thessalonians, taken in its unity, is that the finally impenitent, in that day which Paul speaks of (Acts 17 : 31), shall be *eternally destroyed*, not punished with banishment from God and the glorious perfections of his character, and the attendant purity and beauty of his surroundings. This would be no punishment either in anticipation or reality. They see nothing to admire or emulate in his perfections, and have no desire for purity in themselves or holiness in their associates.

The eighth verse of the second chapter of this epistle confirms our interpretation of the passage under consideration. We are there told that the lawless shall be consumed by the brightness or, as the New Version says, "the manifestation" of the coming of the Lord Jesus. The New Version adopts the text of the three most authoritative manuscripts, and reads "slay" instead of "consume." This lawless one shall be *slain* or *killed* by the same coming of the Lord spoken of in chapter 1, which coming was to bring similar destruction to the incorrigibly wicked. It appears like a waste of time and space to reinforce such plain truths as the above with other scriptures; but as this is not written for those who are convinced that destruction is to come upon the wicked, but for those who think they are not to be destroyed, but to be preserved and made eternally miserable, one or two more of the many texts containing the same truths may not be superfluous. Ps. 92 : 7 says,

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"When all the workers of iniquity do flourish it is that they shall be destroyed forever." Num. 24 : 20 says: "Amalek was the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be that he *perish forever*." Is eternal suffering in the remotest degree intimated in the case of Amalek? By no means, but an endless destruction or extinction, without the possibility of a revival. So when it says the wicked "shall be destroyed forever," it does not mean that they shall be tormented forever, but that their destruction or extinction shall be so complete that there shall be no possibility of a revival. Again, Ps. 145 : 20: "The Lord preserveth all them that love him, but all the wicked will he destroy." Does this refer merely to the preservation of the righteous from the calamities incident to this stage of being and the disappointment of the plans and expectations of the wicked? There is nothing said about happiness or prosperity as either preserved or destroyed; it is the *two classes of men* that are thus treated; the one is preserved from destruction, the other given over to its power; and this, not as relates to this present stage of being, but as the ultimate, unchangeable award. When God says he will destroy a man, who has the right to say he will not do it, but only so change the conditions by which the man is surrounded as to impair or destroy his comfort or happiness? To destroy a man's happiness is one thing, and may be done in many ways, for he is the creature of circumstances; but to destroy the man himself is something very different, for he is the creature of God, and can only be destroyed by the same power that gave him being.

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Let me ask our religious teachers, in all earnestness, this question: When God says over and over again in language as explicit as can be found, that he will destroy a man or a class of men, and you teach that he will not do this but will do something else, is it not likely that thinking men and women will come to doubt either the teachings of the Bible or your interpretations of them? If, when God speaks of the destruction of the wicked, the original means that it is their happiness or well-being only that he refers to, then let our version so read, and then your teachings and God's word will be in harmony, but if the original will not allow of such rendering consistently with its spirit, then should not your teachings be brought into line with its assertions, and in this way harmony between the two be established?

Another term constantly used both in the Old Testament and the New, in application to the wicked, is "perish." This is a word of great significance. A being or thing is *destroyed* by a force or influence outside of itself; it *perishes* through its own inherent weakness. Worcester says, "To perish expresses more than to die; whatever dies perishes to a certain extent; every temporal thing that has life must die; all things decay, dead bodies perish." This word is one that is constantly employed to define the final state of the unpardoned sinner against God. In John 3:15 our Lord says: "The Son of man must be lifted up that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life."

In John 16:10 he says: "I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish." The clear alternative presented in the above-quoted verses is, that those who

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do not believe on Jesus, and to whom he does not give eternal life, shall perish. What is it that shall perish? Is it their "spiritual life," so called, with its aspirations after holiness, its faith towards God, and love for his children for his sake? with its outward manifestation in gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, patience? It cannot be this, for never having possessed it, they cannot have it perish. Where the Bible says a man shall perish, to assert that it means anything else than just what it says seems to me like entering a labyrinth, from which there is no hope of our escape.

By accepting the language of the Bible to mean what it would mean if found in any other book, all difficulty vanishes at once. "Eternal life" means just that and nothing else, and "to perish" means just that and nothing else.

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CHAPTER VII.

I IMAGINE that the question has more than once been thought, if not spoken, What does the writer do with Matt. 25:46, where the explicit declaration of the Lord is, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment"? In the first place the Greek *kolasis*, here translated punishment, has not connected with it the idea of the infliction of positive pain or suffering; it means "restraint," and the thought expressed by it appears to me the same as that entertained by Job, David, and Hezekiah, whose recorded utterances on the subject we considered in chapter 5. There I endeavored to show that the belief of these men and of their times was that the wicked once committed to *sheol* were cut off from all activity of conscious existence and given over to silence, darkness and forgetfulness; in fact, that all conscious being ceased. The meaning of *kolasis*, so far as I have the ability and opportunity of ascertaining, is fully in accord with this, and not necessarily associated with pain, suffering, misery, anguish, despair, and torment. All these experiences are expressed in the original of the New Testament by other and *entirely different* words having no analogy with the one here used.

Indeed, were this one utterance of our Lord all that is said in the Bible concerning the future of the condemned,

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the most that could be asserted upon its authority, regarding them, would be that they should be cut off from all the activities of being. Whether this should be effected by continuing their existence and prohibiting the exercise of their powers by the controlling will of the Creator, or by his withdrawing from them his supporting power, and permitting them to perish through their own inherent tendencies, no man, from the light afforded by this single passage, could definitely affirm. Instead, therefore, of taking this one verse as the sum of all Bible truth in relation to the subject, and seeking to make all other Scripture conform to it at any expense, is it not better and wiser, and less liable to result in error, to take these words as in themselves indefinite, as they really are, and define them by the help of the many explanatory and qualifying teachings of our Lord himself, and other clear and explicit declarations of the word of God? It seems to me that the opposite course has led to the mystifying of much that is plain, the encumbering of much that is simple, and to the substitution for the truth of God of the traditions of men, giving the enemy an advantage over us, facilitating his attacks, and weakening our defenses.

So far as I can ascertain, this word *kolasis* means nothing akin to the signification generally attached to it, and by any unprejudiced mind, it must be admitted that there is at least a possibility that its meaning has not been rightly interpreted. Why then insist that all the teachings of the Bible relating to the doom of the wicked, be bent and twisted so as to conform to this, instead of taking the entire testimony of God's word,

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and letting this without any enlargement or diminution fit in as it most perfectly will with all that the Bible elsewhere reveals concerning the utter consumption, complete destruction, and final eternal death of such as at the last shall be judged by Him to whom all judgment is committed as unworthy of eternal life? We have the same word *kolasis* in 1 John 4: 18, where in the authorized version it is translated "torment," because I suppose the translators of that day, being fallible men, allowed *their conception* of the truth to influence their decision in regard to the meaning of the language in which the truth was embodied. The revisers have, in the New Version, rendered the word in the two places by the same English equivalent, "punishment," though it seems to me, as a plain, unlearned man, that in this latter place the English word is very far from giving the idea of the writer, and that "restraint" would have fully done so.

This epistle seems to have been written to assure believers in Jesus as the Christ, that they are the children of God, and that they might, because of this, have free access to, and fellowship with him, and with his Son, Jesus Christ (chapters 1: 3, and 3: 12); and to impress upon them the blessedness and responsibilities growing out of this relation. First among these blessings is God's love for us, and first among the responsibilities is to manifest our love, not only toward him, but toward all whom he loves. The gift of his Son is a demonstration of his love to us, and should so stimulate our love and faith that they should never waver, but always be sure of his paternal response to every outreach of filial

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affection on our part. But if this relation is to be what God intends it to be, it must be divested of fear (not reverential but slavish), because this imposes restraint, *kolasis*. We all know the effect of fear in this direction; it embarrasses, puts one under restraint; he cannot act, or speak, or even think as when free from its control. This feeling of restraint is the natural accompaniment of fear, and to obviate and overcome it is that to which the line of thought penned by the apostle seems intended to lead.

Does not the postulate of the apostle that "perfect love casteth out fear," make it a necessity to translate *kolasis* by restraint, if the sequence is logical? Fear, he goes on to say, hath *kolasis*, which is translated punishment; but fear and punishment do not *necessarily* stand related in the slightest degree. Matt. 7:6, 7 tells us that the three disciples on the mount of transfiguration were sore afraid. In Rev. 1:17, the beloved disciple was prostrated at the sight of his glorified Lord, and it must have been fear which was the dominant emotion in his case, for it was to this sentiment that the Lord, who needs not to be told what is in the mind of man, addressed his words of encouragement, "Fear not." In neither of these instances, and there are other similar ones, was any punishment intended or apprehended, but there was naturally very great embarrassment and restraint.

Mark 9:6 says that Peter "*wist not what to say* for they were sore afraid," and Luke 9:33 reports Peter as not knowing what he was saying. In this instance we see that fear, although it was not associated with any thought of punishment, did produce very great restraint,

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It seems as if there can be no doubt that restraint is the word that should be used to translate *kolasis* in 1 John 4:18, and if so there, why not in Matt. 25:46? That verse then would read, "And these shall go away into everlasting (*kolasis*) inaction, and the righteous into everlasting (*zōē*) activity." This it seems to me is the real significance of the language used by our Lord. Neither the nature of the restraint or the activity are there defined, but the Bible is so clear and explicit respecting both the one and the other, that it would seem as if there need be no doubt regarding them. But there is another good reason why Matt. 25:46 should not be assumed to be the whole sum of Bible truth regarding the doom of the wicked. The Greek word *aionios*, translated "everlasting," is asserted by men of the most unquestioned piety and learning to have no reference to duration, but only to the dispensation or age in which the event alluded to should transpire, and it is claimed by them that Matt. 25:46 should read: "These shall go away into the punishment of the world to come, and the righteous into the life of the world to come."

I do not pretend to judge between the two opinions, or even to surmise which may be correct; all that I contend for is that, with a fair showing, *kolasis* would be more nearly rendered by the English "restraint," and with the meaning of *aiōnios*, to say the least in dispute, there is no such unequivocal, unmistakable authority to this verse as to warrant us in claiming that the entire Bible shall be interpreted by its uncertain light. But even admitting that *aiōnios* does mean "everlasting," and that *kolasis* does mean "punishment," then the verse as it

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stands in our versions is very far from overthrowing or even conflicting with the doctrine of the ultimate destruction of the wicked. Our Lord here only says they "shall go away into everlasting punishment." He gives no intimation regarding the nature of that punishment, but 2 Thess. 1 : 9 does define the nature of it very clearly. It says "they shall be punished with everlasting destruction." And in Matt. 13 : 40, 42, our Lord himself no less clearly defines it, saying that "they shall be burned up." I cannot see that there is any conflict between the word of our Lord and the writings of Paul in 2 Thess. 1 : 9, or that the views of the writer are at variance with either. But says one, "At Luke 16:23, Jesus Christ certainly says of the rich man that in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments; there surely can be no misapprehension in relation to this." One would think there should not be any, but the very manner in which the passage is referred to, shows that the most radical misapprehension does exist regarding this very simple parable. In the first place, the word "hell," which in the Greek is *hades*, the equivalent of the Hebrew *sheol*, means simply the unseen state, and has no analogy with *Gehenna*, translated "hell" in Mark 9 : 43, 45, 47. Lazarus was as much in hell as the rich man, but the one lifted up his eyes in torment, and the other his from the bosom of Abraham. The effect of confounding *hades*, or the unseen state upon which the soul enters at death, with *Gehenna*, the place of final punishment, has been to lead many to think this parable conclusive as to the eternal torment of the wicked, while all that can be learned from it concerning their condition after leaving this world is, that between

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death and the Judgment they are in a state of intense suffering. It gives no intimation regarding the effect upon them of the lake of fire, when at the final award they shall be consigned to its abyss.

But if *hades* proved a place of misery for the rich man, it was one of unspeakable rest and comfort and bliss to Lazarus, and in this direction there is not so much tendency to misapprehension; and the consolation derived from the record of his experience has helped to bear many a burden, dried many a tear, and comforted many a bereaved and sorrowing heart.

> "Yes, the delightful day will come,
> When my dear Lord will call me home,
> And I shall see his face,"

Is the sustaining refrain of many a weary sojourner, in this, the house of his pilgrimage. It is to be borne in mind that the Greek *basanos*, rendered "torment" (Luke 16:23), has not the slightest analogy with *kolasis*, rendered "torment" (1 John 4:18), which claimed our attention a few pages back. If you ask me how I explain Rev. 14:11, I frankly answer that I make no attempt at explanation. To myself I say, this is a single sentence in a book filled with the sublimest imagery portrayed in the most highly figurative language, the interpretation of which has caused the widest divergence on the part of the many writers who have attempted to unfold its meaning. Under such circumstances it does not seem as if this one verse should make even a ripple on the current of God's truth, as it is gathered in a mighty stream from every portion of his holy word. It should also be noted that this verse refers in any case only to a single class of the wicked, and not to universal humanity.

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CHAPTER VIII.

IN chapter 2, commenting upon the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel, I had occasion to say that when God threatened the sinner with death, there was no force in the threat unless death meant the cessation of life. The same holds true with reference to the following texts, and all others of a like import. In John 8 : 24 our Lord tells his hearers that "they *shall die* in their sins;" and in Rom. 8 : 13 Paul writes, "If ye live after the flesh ye *shall die.*" In neither of these places can so-called "spiritual death" be meant, for this was the very condition which those addressed were then in, and for being in which they were to die. In John, our Lord tells his hearers that in rejecting him they lost their only chances of escape from the penalty denounced against sin, viz., death; and in Romans, Paul says that natural, psychical life aside from the life imparted in the begetting from above, had no continuance, but must come to an end.

With our definition of "life" and "death" all these passages and such as these are plain, and, so far as I know, so is every other in the entire Bible relating to the subject, except that one in Rev. 14 : 11. With any other definition not only are they not plain, but, as it appears to me, they cannot be made so. But I am some-

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times asked, "Will not the adoption of such views as you advocate destroy the belief of men in the immortality of the soul, and lead to evil?" As to the immortality of the soul, it will be overthrown only so far as it conflicts with the teachings of the Bible, and to this extent this, and every other doctrine, deserves overthrow. The Bible nowhere says that the soul is immortal, but everywhere, from first to last, asserts over and over, both directly and by implication, the contrary. When, at the first, man was put upon probation, he was assured by God that if he transgressed he should *surely die.* This very threat asserts his mortality. How can death be visited upon an immortal being? The very term immortal signifies not mortal, not subject to death. It becomes us with all reverence to say it, but even the Almighty One cannot visit death upon an immortal being. Every verse that asserts the destruction and death of the wicked, is an assertion of man's mortality.

Ps. 66 : 9 says, "O, bless our God . . . which holdeth our soul in life." If the soul is deathless by its constitution, can it with any propriety be said to be held in life by a power outside of itself? The admission that it needed such extraneous support for the continuance of its life, implies that if from any cause that support should be withheld, it would die. Ps. 103 : 4 is another instance of a similar character: "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction." In this psalm David clearly recognizes the two-fold nature of man,—the material, physical organization, and the nobler, immaterial part, the soul. He addresses his soul as if it were a being independent of himself, and calls upon it to render unto the

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Lord the homage and praise his great name and many mercies deserved. It is the iniquity of his soul, not his iniquity, that is forgiven. The life of his soul, not his life, that is redeemed from destruction. It is not material good and physical life that engage his thoughts, but the exceeding mercy of God towards his sinful soul, sick beyond the help of any human remedies, exposed to destruction which no human power could avert. That this is so appears from the contrast he draws between this mortal life, verses 14 and 16, and the everlasting mercy of God towards those who keep his covenant, verses 17 and 18. If David inherited from Adam a soul whose life was indestructible, where was the need for any one to interpose to redeem it from that to which from its nature it could not be exposed? I cannot find any intimation that David thought his soul exposed to endless suffering, or he would have said, "Who redeemeth thee from eternal misery," if he was seeking to express what was really in his mind. He evidently considered the life of his soul exposed to destruction; not its happiness nor the beauty or innocence of its life, but the very life itself. And this comes out more fully when we consider the latter clause of the fourth verse in connection with the fifth, "Who crowneth thee," *i. e.*, his soul, "with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things." These varied blessings which he enumerates as cause for praise, it should be observed, are not merged in the life of the soul as if they formed a part of it. The life of the soul redeemed from destruction is one thing by itself; these favors from God by which its life is blessed and made beatific

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are distinct from the life, and call for special mention and separate acknowledgment and gratitude. In 1 Tim. 6 : 16 Paul says of the King of kings that "He only hath immortality," and in 1 Cor. 15 : 53, "This mortal must put on immortality," and in the next verse, "when this mortal shall have put on immortality." If man by virtue of his original creation is immortal, how is he by and by to put on that which inheres in the constitution of his being and which has always attached to him? But Paul does not leave this matter of man's entire mortality to be merely inferred, but asserts it plainly in saying, "This mortal must put on immortality."

Is it said that he is speaking of man's material part, which every one admits to be mortal? I answer, There is no evidence of this, but very much to the contrary. In the forty-second verse he says, speaking of the bodies of the dead, "They are sown in corruption, they are raised in incorruption." But besides the conferring of incorruption upon their corruptible bodies, there is the bestowal of immortality upon something which, up to this time, had been mortal. What is this something? Is it the body? No, he has done for that all he purposes and all it needs, when it is raised from the dead incorruptible, a spiritual body. If not the body, what can it be but the soul? The soul, which, by reason of sin, had come under sentence of death? Unless it is the soul that is referred to as mortal, it has no part in this event so inspiriting to the apostle, for unless alluded to as "this mortal," it is not alluded to at all. Twice Paul uses the same formula, once in the fifty-third

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and again in the fifty-fourth verse, preserving in both instances the relative contrast between the corruptible and the incorruptible, the mortal and the immortal, and unless the redemption of the soul as well as the body was included in his anticipations, the exultant shout of triumph with which he closes the consideration of the subject seems scarcely justified. I do not see how we can escape the conclusion that Paul here refers to the soul as mortal, just as plainly as he does to the body as corruptible.

I do not feel called upon to meet any arguments for the immortality of the soul, based upon human reasoning and universal instinct, as all speculations and theories of men are without the scope of this undertaking, which is simply by comparing scripture with scripture, as any man may do, to ascertain what the Bible teaches concerning these great problems affecting our highest interests. I will, however, a little further on try to allay the fears of those who think that the general adoption of such views would be to throw down all barriers between wicked men and the gratification of their sinful propensities. At present I wish to ask if there is anything in the Bible that conflicts with the idea of the complete and final destruction of the wicked, when, at the consummation of the age, God shall have accomplished all his purposes connected with the presence of evil in the world. I do not think that any unbiased search can discover such conflicting teachings; on the contrary, all that the Bible tells us upon the subject harmonizes with the doctrine.

Man is a creature of God. "It is he who has made

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us, and not we who have made ourselves." Man possesses absolutely nothing of his own (Dan. 5 : 23): "The God in whose hand thy breath is and whose are all thy ways." Job 12 : 10, "In whose hand is the life of everything, and the breath of all mankind." Acts 17 : 25, "Seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Man, then, created by God, was without any inherent power to continue the existence so conferred, and the above quotations teach that the same Power that created must be relied on to sustain. I do not say that God may not create beings self-sustained and independent of his volition for their continued existence; but, as regards our race, the Bible, as I read it, asserts that it was not so created. What, then, is the immortality or deathless nature claimed by so many as attaching to the soul of man? So far as I understand, it resolves itself into this: The soul is immortal, *i. e.*, it cannot die unless he whose creative power at the first caused it to be, and whose preserving power alone continues it in being, withdraws his sustaining hand, when, from its original constitution, it ceases to be. If any claim more than this for the soul of man, it is incumbent upon them to bring some strong assurance from the word of God to warrant the setting aside all the plain and oft-repeated assertions of the Bible to the effect that the soul is subject to death, to everlasting destruction, and shall, under certain named conditions, perish, be consumed, and utterly destroyed.

The most constantly used of all sensible things to symbolize this destruction is fire, which, invariably, when applied in its intensest form to material objects, dissi-

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pates into nothingness whatever is subjected to its action. In Matt. 10 : 28 our Lord says, "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in *Gehenna*, and the parallel passage, Luke 12 : 5, says, "Fear him who after he hath killed hath power to cast into *Gehenna*." (Rev. 9 : 5 shows that to kill is not to torment.) It is asserted by our Lord that he who made the soul is able to destroy it, and this he effects by giving it over to the fires of the final Judgment. It seems to me that an unprejudiced interpretation of the above verses, independent of any preconceived opinion of what they should mean, will warrant only the foregoing views. We see, then, that the soul of man equally with the body is, according to the Bible, continued in being only at the will and by the power of God; that he has the power to destroy it, and that he will in some specified cases exert that power. What, then, becomes of the claim made for the immortality or deathlessness of the soul?

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CHAPTER IX.

THE man who with no ulterior intentions for good tears down that which serves a useful purpose either in physics, intellect, or morals, is a public enemy; but he who destroys that he may reconstruct to better ends, deserves the approval of his kind. Convinced as I am upon the word of God that the soul of man is mortal, I would not say a word to disturb the belief of those who find comfort and strength and gladness in believing the contrary, unless I felt sure of being able to offer them something better than that which is taken away. I am no theologian, but if the foregoing pages contain the truth as God has revealed it, and wishes us to understand it, there must be entire harmony between these views and all else that is revealed in connection with the subject considered. God is one, and in all his plans and purposes there must be unity of design and operation; and whatever claims to be a revelation of these plans must be in harmony with itself and susceptible of an intelligent unfolding to the extent of the revelation intended. Is there then any conflict between the views herein advocated, and any revelation which God has made either in his word or works? Is there not on the contrary the most perfect accord such as does not exist between revelation and any other doctrine concerning the

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future? Those who assert that there is no hereafter, but that to all, irrespective of their attitude toward God, physical dissolution is the end of being, come into direct antagonism to the Bible. Nor less in opposition to its teachings are such as claim that for all, whether good or bad, there is beyond the grave an eternity of bliss. And they who stand by the evangelical doctrine of the immortality of the soul and the endless misery of the wicked, certainly must find that it requires a good deal of shaping and trimming to make their doctrine fit in with the other utterances of God's word. The essential oneness of God seems to make our interpretation of the language of the Bible regarding the final doom of the wicked, a necessity.

In Deut. 6:4 Moses calls the attention of the chosen people to the fact that their God, Jehovah, was *one*. The gods of the nations about them were many. One of them was the god of the hills, another of the plains; one was god of the air, one of the sea, one of war, one of justice, and so on through all the economies of the material universe, and all the attributes of moral character. But the God of Israel was not to be thought of in any such way. He held in his hand all the forces of nature; and in an unific condition, and in an infinite degree, was possessed of every moral attribute. "Hear, O Israel! Jehovah our God *is one*, Jehovah." This punctuation seems necessary from the connection, and in its quotation by our Lord in Mark 12:30, as given in the revision, its correctness is certainly made probable if it is not fully established. This quality in the character of God insures unity of design and action in the

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realms of nature and providence, and equally so in his moral government, and forbids our thinking or speaking of his attributes as we think and speak of the qualities possessed by our fellow-men. We say of a man he is honest, but niggardly; of another, he is just, but doesn't know what mercy means; of a third, he is affectionate, but stern. But with God it is not so. In the glorious perfections of his infinitude, every attribute of his moral nature must be exercised equally with every other in each act relating to his moral government. We cannot say of him he is just in this act, and righteous in this, and merciful in this, and faithful in this; but his justice, mercy, righteousness, and truth all unite in every ordering of his holy will. If this be so (and in the nature of the case can it be otherwise?) where can be seen the exhibition of God's love and mercy to the condemned sinner, in prolonging his existence which is hopelessly miserable because irreclaimably sinful?

In view of such an award, it may be that the assembled universe should unite in saying: "Even so, Lord God Almighty, *true and righteous* are thy judgments;" but could they find any place for his loving kindness and tender mercies? If on the other hand, when he has accomplished all his purposes in permitting the introduction of sin into his moral government, and allowed it to work out to demonstration its own inherent tendencies, culminating in complete ruin and misery, and made this manifest to the universe, he deprives the guilty ones of the being which they had employed so far as they were able to frustrate his plans and subvert his authority; he is no more just than merciful, no more severe than com-

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passionate, no more holy than loving. God makes no partial exhibition of his perfection in depriving the sinful soul of that which if prolonged would be only a continued rebellion against himself, and consequent continued misery, thus extirpating the sin while minimizing the loss to the sinner. Does any other disposition of the finally condemned disclose God so in harmony with all that he has revealed of himself in the Bible? As this doctrine manifests the unity of God in the final punishment for transgression, it makes it no less apparent in the precaution taken to lessen, as far as possible, the evils of the first transgression. From this point of observation the cherubim and flaming sword guarding the way to the tree of life, are no longer an enigma. Man was now a transgressor; a sense of guilt was upon him; the faith which had turned lovingly to God and rested implicitly in him had been supplanted by unbelief; fear had taken the place of love, the penalty affixed to disobedience had been incurred, and all the perfections of God, his wisdom, justice, truth and power which before had been pledged for the preservation and well-being of man now only made more certain the execution of the sentence pronounced against sin.

Adam heard the voice of God and hid himself. To bestow eternal life on such a one would be in opposition to all that God has revealed concerning himself. "God is love," and no creature by any act he can perform is capable of changing, in the least degree, the perfection of his character. The truth, holiness, and justice of God were to be manifested in the infliction of the threatened penalty, but no less his love. The tree of life is

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not plucked up, nor cut down, only the way to it is guarded. Man may yet gather of its fruit, and eat, and live forever; but first there must be sorrow and repentance for sin; perfect love must cast out fear, and unwavering faith be ready to respond to the faintest call of God "my Father." The assurance of God's word is, that "without faith it is impossible to please him;" and just as plainly, though not so succinctly, that without it the complete and permanent well being of the creature is also impossible. From the highest archangel before the throne, to the weakest moral nature in the universe, faith in God must be implicit, or there can be no safety against temptation, no security for continued innocence, no equanimity to rest upon when the operations of the All-Wise and Eternal, who giveth not account of any of his matters, outreach the stretch of the finite intellect, and all that can be known of his ways is mysterious and perplexed. So, though to the natural man it may appear an arbitrary requirement on the part of God, when he makes faith in him the ground of justification, and the condition of eternal life; such is not the case, but the possession and exercise of this grace is no more for the honor of the Creator than for the blessing of the creature. As I read the Bible, the whole record of God's dealings with the race shows this one purpose, to re-establish in the nature of man that faith which had been lost, and without which his claims upon man never could be met, nor his love be satisfied in the possession by man of complete felicity beyond the possibility of forfeiture. The means employed by God to effect this restoration have been varied, but the end in

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view has been the same. I know that the churches teach that the faith of Old Testament believers was in a Saviour to come, and that it rested upon Jesus Christ by anticipation, as ours does on him as a Saviour revealed. I think this is not only contrary to the Bible, but to sound policy as well. We make an advance into the enemies' country and take up a position which we cannot hold and from which any well ordered attack forces us to retreat.

In all the enumeration of Old Testament believers in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, not one of them is named as having any reference to a crucified, risen Saviour as the object of his faith.* In all these instances the object of faith was God. The faith of Abram, which was counted to him for righteousness, was in the promise of God concerning a progeny which to men appeared impossible of fulfillment. Gen. 15:56;

*The case of Moses in the twenty-sixth verse appears to be an exception, but I think it is only in appearance, not in reality. The twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses read: "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the *people of God*, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Christ, in Greek, means "anointed," and in 1 Samuel God speaks of the chosen people as his anointed, and in 1 Chron. 16:22, speaking of the providence of God over his people, David says, "He reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed." Again, in Hab. 3:13, the prophet says: "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed." It may be because of my ignorance of the language, but it appears to me that there is no impropriety in translating "χριστος" anointed, especially as the context seems to require it. The preceding verse says he chose to suffer affliction with the *people of God*, and goes on to say that the motive for this was to be found in his esteeming reproach with this anointed people superior to all earthly good.

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Rom. 4:3, 20, 22. As regards Enoch, the writer appears to have had no specific act of faith in his mind, but assumes that he exercised and made manifest this grace, from the recorded fact that he pleased God (Gen. 5:24), and as this was impossible without faith, it must have been possessed by Enoch. So of Noah. He became heir of the righteousness which is by faith, through his implicit faith in God specifically shown in building the ark. So of Gideon (Judges 6:11, 40). All this condescension on the part of God, that the faith of Gideon might be strengthened and perfected, had no reference to Jesus Christ, but only to God himself, whether Gideon could or would confide unhesitatingly in his wisdom to plan, in his faithfulness to his word, and in his power to accomplish his purposes. It seems clear that God alone was the object of faith to Abram, Enoch, Moses, Gideon, and the others referred to in this eleventh chapter of Hebrews; and in Rom. 4:24 it is said that he must be the object of our faith. "Now, it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on *him that raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead.*" Also in 1 Peter 1:20, 21 the apostle says, speaking of our Lord, "but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do *believe in God*, that raised him from the dead."

The acceptance of, and belief in Jesus Christ, in his nature as divine as well as human; in his office as redeemer, and in his teachings as truth, is the corner-stone upon which Christians build their structure of faith in God, without which it is impossible to please

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him. On his divine side belief in Jesus Christ *is* faith in God, but on his human side, as the man Christ Jesus, belief in him is the ladder by which we ascend to faith in God. With this view it is not necessary for us, in order to show that God's plan of salvation has been the same in all ages (viz. by faith), to prove that Noah, Abram, and others of the Old Testament dispensation, had faith in Jesus Christ, but only that they had faith in God, induced, sustained, and strengthened by such means as he saw best suited to this end.

It seems presumption to say that God is restricted to only one medium in awakening and developing faith, and that, the acceptance of Jesus Christ; for the holy angels exercise faith in God, and have done so ever since their creation, and from 1 Peter 1:11, 12, they knew nothing clearly of the character the Son of God was to assume as a suffering, dying Saviour. Neither do the words of our Lord in John 8:56, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day," etc., imply that his faith realized an incarnate, suffering, dying, risen God, for 1 Peter 1:10, 12 says expressly that even the prophets, who foretold this of our Lord, did not understand the import of their prediction, but it was revealed to them that their ministry in this respect was not for themselves but for those of a later generation. Nor does this conflict with Acts 4:12: "For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

It was to the people of Israel that this language was addressed. Acts 3 : 12. "To those who had participated in the death of Jesus (verses 14, 15), to the children of the covenant made by God with Abraham

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(verse 25), and especially to the members of the Sanhedrim, who had personally and actively engaged in his crucifixion. Acts 4:8. To these and all such as these, who have had Jesus preached unto them ineffectually there are no other means that can avail; but to those who never have heard of the gospel of God's grace through him, God may, and I think the Bible teaches that he does, impart such and so much knowledge of himself as suffices for the springing up and keeping alive that faith which he requires. That God was the object of faith to Old Testament believers is also evident from psalm 78. The psalmist recites the wonderful and repeated interpositions on the part of God for his people, and verse 21 says: The Lord was wroth; "and anger came up against Israel because they believed not in God." But it is needless to multiply proofs of the position that belief in Jesus Christ was not required, nor possible under the Mosaic dispensation. How could they believe in him of whom they had not heard?

As said before, it is impolitic as well as unscriptural to claim that faith in Jesus Christ was the ground of justification for Old Testament believers. The passages quoted, I think, show that it is unscriptural; if not, many others might be added; and it is impolitic, because it puts us upon the defensive when the position is attacked by unbelievers. The taking upon himself by the Second Person in the Godhead, of the office of man's Redeemer, and of satisfying the requirements of the broken law, by himself bearing the penalty, made it possible for God, consistently with his justice, to bestow eternal life upon any of the race whom

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he, in his omniscience, saw were fitted to receive it. No truth is more plainly taught in the Bible than *that eternal life is a free gift from God, wholly irrespective of any merit on the part of the recipient.* Faith in God is the only condition, and this not that man may make a return to God for the gift, but that he may stand in such a relation toward God that his infinite love and wisdom may be satisfied that the gift shall prove a blessing and not a curse. (His justice has already been satisfied by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.) If there is in any soul that faith in God which, of his free grace, he reckons for righteousness, and which he in his omniscience sees will make eternal life a blessing, even though it reach out toward him in darkness and ignorance and weakness, who is to limit his grace and prescribe for him the measure of that faith, the possession of which shall permit him, in accordance with his own infinite perfections, and the greatest good of the individual, to bestow upon the possessor eternal life?

That Jesus Christ, by his own death, has redeemed the *entire race* from the penalty of the broken law, which is death, and purchased eternal life for all, is seen from the following passages: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of *the world*" (John 1 : 29); "And he is the propitiation . . . for the sins of the *whole world*" (1 John 2 : 2); "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of *the world*" (1 John 4 : 14). This being the case, we may be sure that Jesus Christ will never let one soul, for whose redemption he has paid the purchase price in full, go down to eternal death, if the relation of that soul toward God is such as to make eternal

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life a blessing. All that our blessed Lord has revealed of himself forbids the idea, and he it is who is to decide at last who is fit and who unfit to receive the gift; for John 5: 22 says: "The Father judgeth no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son." Understanding "eternal life" to be as defined in these pages, the above view is entirely scriptural, the limits wherein the grace of God may be exercised is exceedingly broadened, and the mouths of cavilers completely stopped, who deny the Bible to be a revelation from God because, as they say, it represents him as creating a race of which he knew a large majority would be eternally miserable; for, on the contrary, he does not permit a single one to be so, but ends their rebellion, their misery, and their being, just as soon as his all-wise purposes in allowing sin to come into the world, are accomplished. Not only does God not create men to make them eternally miserable, but he gives to all so much knowledge of himself, either through his word, his works, or the promptings of his Spirit, as that they may manifest their tendencies and reach out after him in faith, even though it be but blindly, (as in Acts 17: 27), if they desire a knowledge of his ways. I know that in Rom. 10: 13 Paul, quoting from Joel 2: 32, says: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be saved;" and proceeds to say that they must hear of him before they can call upon him; but in verse 18 he asserts that all men have heard of him through his works, which in chapter 1: 19, 20 he declares so far reveal him that men are without excuse if they do not glorify him as God. But if any refuse to walk by the light they have, either with the knowledge of

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Jesus Christ, or in ignorance of his salvation, they shall be destroyed; and in thus dealing with them, God is as benificent as he is just, in depriving them of the existence which through their alienation from him, if prolonged, could only be to his dishonor, and their own unspeakable loss.

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CHAPTER X.

THE writer has made these thoughts public in the hope of removing, or at least lessening some of the obstacles to the progress of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no denying that in lands nominally Christian, great numbers of the moral and intelligent are out of practical sympathy with the aims and interests of the church, and it seems to him that one prominent reason is that the church teaches doctrines that do not commend themselves to the reason of thinking men, and which are not so plainly announced in the Bible as to demand acceptance as the word of God. Multitudes, I believe, in Christian lands are prevented from accepting the offer of God's grace, because it is presented to them as a remedy for an ill from which they cannot be made to believe themselves suffering; a way of escape from a danger which they feel is not impending; a redemption from a penalty they have not incurred. Never in the history of the Christian world has intelligence been so general among men as now, and this intelligence is brought to bear upon religious as well as secular matters. The assertion is doubtless true that never were there half the number of persons studying the Bible as at the present day. The more critical rendering of God's word out of the languages in which it

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was originally written, and the many helps provided for its study by those who can read neither Hebrew or Greek, are factors in the problem that must be taken into the account. One can hardly attend any church a few months without listening to sermons from texts which any careful reader of the Bible knows are no foundation for the teachings built upon them, and though the truth inculcated might be found in some other part of the Bible, because it is not in the passage under consideration, the listener silently protests during the whole sermon, and goes away inclined to doubt the entire Bible, when it was only the human infirmity of the preacher that was at fault. At the last prayer-meeting I attended the passage of Scripture selected was 1 John 3:14, 24, and the subject, "American Indians Our Brothers." Our pastor included not only the Indians, but the heterogeneous crowd of immigrants that is flocking to our shores, not omitting those from the Flowery Kingdom, and pressed upon us all our duties to them as brethren, as taught in this chapter. Another clergyman, a D. D., who was present, in his prayer asked that professing Christians "might be made sensible that unless they cherished the love here mentioned towards the Indians, the love of God was not in them." It is so plain that the apostle is not writing regarding the duty of man to man, but of the relation existing between Christians growing out of their union with Jesus Christ, that it appeared to me a perversion of Scripture to attempt to teach from it that a Christian should cherish the same love and tenderness for a murdering Apache that he does for his fellow Christians with whom he has a common faith,

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a common Lord, and a common life. And how could one join in the prayer that the "Holy Spirit would make him sensible that, unless such were his feelings, he was abiding in death, and without evidence that the love of God dwelt in him?" I have heard more than one sermon preached from Prov. 1:24, 26: "Because I have called and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded . . . . I also will laugh at your calamity and mock when your fear cometh." The speakers uniformly put these words in the mouth of God, and based their teachings upon them as his utterances. The most superficial student can see that it is wisdom personified who is speaking, and not the Lord, and any one conversant with the Bible should know that the idea of God's laughing at the distress of his creatures, wicked and rebellious though they be, or of adding to their misery by mocking taunts, is utterly at variance with all which he has said in relation to the subject. Our divine Master wept over the calamities which he foresaw about to fall upon his persecutors and murderers, but no word of mockery or laugh of anticipated satisfaction over their coming overthrow was ever heard from him. It is true that in Ps. 2:4 God is represented as deriding the futile attempts of men to frustrate his eternal purposes, but this is a very different matter from that referred to above. Another similar perversion of Scripture is illustrated by Prov. 8:17. There is hardly a Sunday-school in the land that has not upon its walls: "They that seek me early shall find me," and the children are taught that these are the words of God, expressing the relation in which they stand towards him.

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If the child is ever led to study the Bible, or even to read it attentively, he finds that it is wisdom which he is admonished to strive to gain; redemption from ignorance, not redemption from sin as he has been taught; and also that "early" has no reference to the tender years of the seeker, but only to the diligence with which he is to seek, and he feels, to put it in plain English, that he has been deceived, and whether he concludes that his teachers did it intentionally or in ignorance, the result to him is the same in lessening the value and authority of everything else they have taught him.

In 1 Tim. 1:8 Paul says: "The law is good if one use it lawfully" (what a pity that it is not so used to a greater degree), and the same may be said of the entire word of God; and for a minister, set to watch for souls, to take any single verse or passage of Scripture, and use it out of the connection in which God put it, seems to me a crime to be taken note of by all who have the oversight of the church of Jesus Christ. The passages quoted are only illustrations of the evil referred to; and such perversions, as I call them, every one can recall, and it is needless to multiply examples.

The teaching by the church of the inherent immortality of the soul, and its destiny unless reconciled to God, to endless misery, is another stumbling-block to some who are seeking to know the truth. As said at the opening of this chapter, men neglect or refuse to avail themselves of the offer of God's grace, because they are urged to accept it as a way of escape from a penalty which they feel they have not incurred. The doctrine of the endless suffering of the wicked is so at variance

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with what the Bible reveals as the character of God, that the reason rebels against it; and it is because the church generally insists that this doctrine and the entire Bible stand or fall together, that so many say, "Then let the Bible go." But it is asked, "Is the Bible to be submitted to the test of human reason, and all that proves unsatisfactory to it to be set aside?" By no means. All that I claim is that when God appeals to our reason he makes full provision for satisfying all its reasonable demands; and when he requires faith concerning matters above, or without the scope of our reason, he gives us *his sure word* for faith to rest upon.

When our religious teachers come to us with "Thus saith the Lord," the only province of reason is to ascertain the fact of his having sent the message, and this assured, reverently and implicitly to abide by its teachings. But when any man or any number of men come to their fellow-men as teachers of religious truth, and bring no "Thus saith the Lord," but only their own interpretation of what he has said, then reason asserts the right and duty of trying in her court the correctness of their conclusions; and the acceptance of religious teachings upon the authority of men, unless enforced by "Thus saith the Lord," or the sanction of our own reason, appears to me not faith but credulity. But returning from our digression, let us examine a little more in detail the position occupied by the objectors to the Bible as a revelation from God, on the ground stated, which was touched upon in the last chapter. These objectors argue, with a great deal of plausibility, that the Bible cannot be a revelation from God for it

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teaches (so its advocates claim) that the Creator has brought into being a race that he knew would transgress his laws, and in numberless instances would refuse to return to their allegiance upon the offer of mercy being extended to them, and that in his creative act they are so constituted that they must be eternally sinful and intolerably miserable. If, say they, the Bible teaches this, we do not believe it ever came from God. If it does not teach it, then its expounders are either ignorant of its true meaning, or they are willfully misleading men in preaching what they do not themselves believe, and so prove themselves hypocrites. This is their case, as they put it.

Now, if the clear, undisputed declaration of the Bible were that man was so created, and so destined, we might, according to our light and ability, seek to refute their arguments, oppose their designs, and calmly wait for God to vindicate his ways in his own good time. But, if, in the absence of this distinct utterance of God's word, and with so much to the contrary in its teachings, we admit that the Bible teaches that eternal life was only a possibility for man, as originally created, to be conferred as the reward of obedience during his probationary term, and that having, through transgression, forfeited all right to this, his Creator, in purest mercy, renewed the offer, not upon condition of perfect obedience, which man could not now render, but upon the condition of faith, which, with the proffered help of the Holy Spirit, he could exercise, we deprive such cavilers of any ground to base such an argument upon; for the Bible shows God to be infinite in mercy in postponing

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the infliction of the penalty incurred, and in providing another way in which the obtaining of the blessing was made possible to all. If, however, any fail to avail themselves of this second opportunity, they shall be destroyed, and in their destruction, the hatred of God for sin, and his justice in destroying the sinner, are no more apparent than are his love and mercy, as has before been shown.

The final death of the wicked cannot be made the basis for charging God with cruelty, for, though the language of the Bible would imply that their destruction is accomplished by an absolute act of God, no such act is necessary on his part; for the soul, being in its nature subject to death, and sustained in life only by the will and power of its Creator, the moment these are withheld it perishes because of its inability to preserve its own life, for " none can keep alive his own soul." Ps. 22 : 29.

There is, it appears to me, another error through which our religious teachers confuse themselves, mislead those who wait upon their ministry, and invalidate the teachings of the Bible upon this subject, in not distinctly separating, in their minds, as also in the minds of their people, the *penalty* affixed by God to sin, from the *consequences*, or *results*, of sin. We see in the world around us that the transgression of God's laws in the realm of physics, entails temporal loss and suffering, and so, easily and without much reflection, accept the doctrine that eternal suffering is the punishment for transgressing his moral laws. This, however, is not the teaching of the Bible, but rather of that wonderful creation of man's genius, " Paradise Lost," which grand and perhaps

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unequalled as it is as a poetic conception, has, I think, done incalculable harm as a basis of religious belief. Because of this confounding of penalty affixed to transgression, with the consequences resulting from it, many sincere Christians think the truth of God's word is assailed when anything else than eternal, insupportable anguish is allotted to the wicked as their portion. When God created man, and established him upon this earth, and gave him dominion over the lower order of creation, he laid upon him one interdict, and affixed to its disregard a specific penalty. The prohibition related to the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the penalty for disobedience was *death*, nothing more, nothing less, and *nothing else*. But it is asked, Does not the Bible say that sin brought death into the world *and all our woes?* A great many think it does, but of all I have asked to do so, none have been able to refer me to the verse, and with hardly an exception people are surprised to learn that Milton, and not Paul is the author of the sentiment. What Paul does say is, "By one man sin entered into the world, and *death* by sin, and so *death* passed upon all men." Rom. 5 : 12.

In human laws the same difference is often to be seen between the *penalty* for transgression and the *results* of transgression. For instance, a man is engaged in business as a merchant, he has the confidence of the community in which he lives, his business is fairly prosperous and enables him to support in comfort and happiness the wife and family that bless and brighten his home. In an evil hour temptation assails and overcomes him, and he fraudulently signs the name of another.

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His crime is discovered and fastened upon him, and the penalty for forgery, which is confinement in the State Prison, is inflicted upon him; and this is as far as the *penalty* for his crime reaches. But its consequences do not end here. His business, which, under his watchful eye and careful hand, yielded a fair return, in the care of mercenary or incompetent agents, is conducted at a loss; and soon poverty succeeds to competence, and want takes the place of plenty in that once happy home, and the wife and little ones are introduced to a life of hardship and privation The law took no cognizance of all their sufferings in affixing the penalty of imprisonment to the crime of forgery; these are no part of the legal penalty, neither are the grief and remorse which wring the heart of the criminal when he learns that those he loves so well are exposed to these bitter experiences which are the consequences of his wrong doing, but are no part of the penalty contemplated by the law. One point to be kept in mind during all the investigation of this subject, I think, is that God has not permitted any vagueness or uncertainty to exist regarding the penalty which he has affixed to sin. In the very beginning of the race he made it clearly known to our first parents, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen: 2:17. Further on in the history of the race he reiterates in most unmistakable language, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Eze. 18:4. And in Rom. 6:23 Paul says, "The wages of sin is death." We see, therefore, that the full penalty denounced by God against the sinner is inflicted when he passes under the power of the second death, even though that experience should be a release from suffering, rather than its infliction.

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Suppose, in the instance above cited, that the condemned, instead of being so pleasantly situated as regards worldly surroundings, had been an outcast, without home or friends, with no means of support, abandoned and vile. The change to inside the prison walls, in his case, is all for the better. He has clean, comfortable clothes in place of his dilapidated ones; wholesome and nutritious food, which, though coarse, is abundant; he is taught some useful trade, and made capable of earning an honest living. All this is a real blessing to him, but, nevertheless, the requirements of justice are as fully met in the infliction of the penalty affixed to the crime as in the former case. Therefore, I do not see that we need exercise ourselves over the objection that is urged against the doctrine of the eternal death of the wicked, that instead of being an infliction upon them of suffering, it is an escape from it; for God nowhere in his word attaches suffering to sin as its penalty, but always *death*, and if his holy law is satisfied when the denounced penalty is inflicted, why should we as less tolerant of sin than God, insist upon a more terrible expiation? David understood human nature well when he chose to fall into the hand of God rather than into the hands of men, for, said he, "his mercies are great." 2 Sam. 24:10, 14. Another objection raised against the doctrine of the final destruction of the wicked is that, should it prevail, it would induce men to continue in sin, inasmuch as present gratification would be considered more than an equivalent for ultimate destruction, and if men understood that no suffering was attached to sin, a very great inducement, which is now held out to them to turn to God, would be taken away.

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In the first place, if this doctrine is in accord with what God has revealed in the Bible, we have nothing to do with the possible effects of teaching it. Our only concern should be to know what God says, being satisfied that his word will not return to him void, but will accomplish that which he purposes. In the second place, the Bible does not say that suffering does not result from sin, but, on the contrary, plainly says in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16), that after death, and before the Judgment, the wicked shall suffer intense anguish. The expression, "The wrath of the Lamb," in Rev. 6:16, suggests in its single line more of terror, anguish, and despair, than the farthest reach of our imagination can attain to, or language express; and if terror is the element to be employed in bringing men back to repentance, faith, and love, there is enough in these few words when brought home to an awakened conscience, to make the stoutest-hearted sinner cry for mercy.

But is it true that the teaching of this doctrine will encourage men in sin? In Job 2:4 we read: "All that a man hath will he give for his life," and though this is the assertion of the father of lies, God acted upon it as if true, and human experience through all time shows that, to the great mass of humanity, even this mortal life, with all its discomforts and uncertainties, is more precious than any other possession. If this is so in relation to this brief, unsatisfactory stage of being, is it reasonable to say that the possibility of an endless life, freed from the surroundings that so try and grieve us here, and with our natures brought into perfect harmony

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with God, presents no inducement, or, at most, a very slight one, to turn to God? Some, it is too probable that many, will go on in sin regardless of the crown of life held out as the prize to him that overcometh. But this tells nothing for or against the tendency of this teaching, for multitudes reject the offers of God's grace, even though enforced with all the alternative terrors of an eternity of sin, constantly increasing in sinfulness, accompanied, step by step, with an accumulating misery, till, in the cycles of eternity, the sin of each condemned soul shall exceed the aggregate sins of the whole race, and his sufferings because of his sin shall outweigh the accumulated misery of the entire race throughout all time; and then his sin, his suffering, and his capacity for sinning and suffering shall be only in the infantile stage of their development.

Multitudes, I say, have rejected the offer of mercy, even when taught from the pulpit that this was the punishment for unforgiven sin. Multitudes, to-day, with these teachings sounding in their ears, and under the full light of the gospel, turn away from the salvation it offers, and probably multitudes would continue to reject God's mercy should the church teach the eternal destruction of the wicked, instead of their eternal misery. But, as said before, that proves nothing as to the truth or falsity of the doctrine. Although a sense of loss or danger must precede any appreciation of the need and importance of a Saviour, terror induced by representations such as above described is no necessary element in bringing men to a sense of their danger, and their need of the salvation offered through Jesus Christ. Indeed, the dom-

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inating influence of such a dread in the heart, it seems to me, must hinder one from coming to God with that disposition which is pleasing to him. The love of men is what he asks for, and on this foundation the Holy Spirit builds up the structure of faith and works; but slavish fear and filial love cannot exist together, and the heart that will not yield its supreme faith and love to God under the clear presentation of the ruin wrought by sin, the infinite love and compassion of Jesus Christ in working out, through his own humiliation and sacrifice, a complete salvation from that ruin, and through his own death offering to the condemned sinner eternal life, made glorious by being clothed upon with the robe of his righteousness, and beatific in conformity to his will and the enjoyment of his favor, would hardly be prompted to the exercise of that faith, and the yielding that love through fear of punishment, even should a lost soul return from hades and emphasize, out of his own fearful experience, the destructive tendencies of sin, and the terrible character of its retribution.

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CHAPTER XI.

THERE does not appear to me any valid objection either in revelation, reason, or experience to the plain preaching of this doctrine of the destruction of the finally impenitent at the day of Judgment; and all its collateral truths, one of which, and not the least important, is that while eternal life is wholly of grace and a free gift through Jesus Christ, the conditions pertaining to that life, though all flowing from the favor of God, and partaking of the blessedness resulting from conformity to his will and harmony with his purposes may be diverse in different individuals within the widest conceivable limits, according as the acts and motives during this probationary state have been loyal and loving toward our Lord, or careless of his honor, and indifferent to the interests of his kingdom. When the church teaches that eternal life means all of unending felicity that God can bestow, there is nothing left of any supplemental good to be obtained as a reward for the aspiring, neither is there any loss to those who apparently constituting the great mass of our churches, are content with their present condition and prospects Having been taught by their spiritual guides that by eternal life is meant all of beatitude for which their natures have capacity, and that this is the free gift of

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God without merit on their part, they logically conclude that nothing they can do or leave undone can augment or diminish the measure of consummate bliss involved in the gift of eternal life.

Let it be admitted that eternal life means the conditions that pertain to life, and not the life itself, and that these conditions are perfect holiness and supreme felicity to the fullest capacity of the recipient, and it seems to me that you have discovered one of the reasons of the great, and to many inexplicable apathy regarding spiritual attainments, which pervades so largely our churches of all denominations, and renders their members content to remain on so low a plane as regards religious duties and knowledge. Our Creator has made us with natures powerfully susceptible to the influence of prospective reward consequent upon certain actions, and himself appeals to this quality constantly in his dealings with men, as shown in the Scriptures. Abram was stimulated to leave his early home and kindred by the promise of God that he would make of him a great nation. Gen. 12:1, 2. Moses, in casting in his lot with God's anointed people, "had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb. 11:26), and in dealing with his chosen people God always coupled reward with obedience. Our Lord when on earth constantly appealed to this sentiment in encouraging his disciples. (See Matt. 10:40, 42, and 19:28, 29.) In Heb. 12:2 we learn that our Lord himself was not insensible to its power, for it there says that he "for the joy set before him endured the cross despising the shame," and in Isa. 53:11, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

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The very closing of Revelation says: "I come quickly and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. If this quality in our natures is so constantly and effectively used by God in influencing men for good, why should those who are seeking to win men to God ignore it in their efforts? The church of Rome is wiser than we in this respect, for the rewards for certain deeds and alms are fully set forth by her teachers, though the objects which can be gained by them are falsely stated.

No man can by any work or merit of his own obtain the pardon of one sin, or stand justified before God. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," "for whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Jas. 2:10. But the penalty of death once remitted through faith, and eternal life accepted as a free gift, from that moment the stimulus of rewards is legitimately employed. I say legitimately, for our blessed Lord himself employs it when he says, Whoso giveth a cup of water to one of mine for my sake shall in no wise lose his reward. It is said that this is a low level to work upon, and that our service for the Master should spring from love and gratitude, and not from hope of reward, and this probably is true; but our Father in Heaven takes us as we are, and purifies what in us is impure, cleanses what is defiled, elevates what is debased, and spiritualizes what is material, "howbeit that is not first which is spiritual but that which is natural and afterward that which is spiritual." While we are in the flesh if we can judge from revelation and observation, God has made our very being to depend upon a certain amount

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of self-love, which induces us to care for ourselves and anticipate and provide for our welfare; and this he has made perfectly compatible with our love for him and our fellow-men; and if he holds out rewards as an inducement to effort, should his servants seek to be wiser than he?

I have within a few months listened to an influential, aggressive, hardworking, orthodox minister, as he sought to fire his people with greater zeal in active Christian work, and to higher attainment in Christian character, in order that their condition in Heaven might be one of greater honor and brighter effulgence. But as his hearers had all their lives been taught that eternal life was perfect holiness and complete, unending felicity, and as this was secured to them through Jesus Christ as a free gift, independent of any merit in them, they could hardly be made to understand how anything could be added to this as a reward for anything they might do, unless in some mysterious way a vessel could be filled to its *utmost capacity* and then made a little fuller. The church deprives herself and her Lord of one of the very strongest arguments for active Christian work and giving on the part of its members, when she teaches that eternal life means not the life itself secured eternally, but the conditions pertaining to it; for the Bible asserts repeatedly and emphatically that eternal life is God's free gift, and in the obtaining of it, nothing that a man can do can have the least effect. Now if eternal life means the moral relations a man sustains toward God, and the conditions under which he exists in the world to come, then nothing that he can do, having once secured this gift, can in

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any way affect these relations or conditions. But if it means, as I define it, then having through faith and repentance received the gift, a man may, by loving service for Jesus through the help of the Holy Spirit, cultivate and strengthen those relations, and enrich and adorn and beautify those conditions, and lay up for himself treasure in Heaven that shall immeasurably affect the happiness of that eternal life.

It seems to me that the plain teaching of the Bible is that the Holy Spirit, in the begetting from above, imparts to the believer a life which partakes of his own divine nature, and, as in the natural birth, the life derived from our parents partakes of their nature and limitations, so in the new birth, the life derived from the begetting of the Holy Spirit partakes of the nature of the divine parentage, and, consequently, must be not only eternal in duration, but holy in character, although not necessarily consummate in blessedness. It may be objected that if this position is correct, the believer must also be omniscient and omnipotent, and possessed of perfect beatitude, as all these attributes pertain to God. All that I can answer to this is, that nowhere have we the promise of any such participation in the perfections of the All-perfect One, but we have the assurance of an endless duration (John 10 : 28; 1 John 2 : 17), and of perfect holiness (Heb. 12 : 10), and the word of God is a sure foundation to rest upon. I do not find anywhere in the Bible the assurance that the portion of the redeemed from among men shall be the satisfaction of every wish, or that this is the portion of the pure and holy who have never sinned.

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I know that the received definition of "eternal life" has carried with it an implication of this, and our hymn speaks of having "every longing satisfied, with full fruition blessed," but I do not find it in the Bible even by implication. We read in Rev. 7 : 17 and 21 : 4, that "God shall wipe away all tears," and that there shall be "no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, nor any more pain." These experiences are the penalty and result of broken law, and cannot be known there, as all will be at one with the will of God, and obedience to his laws can never bring anything but good. But all the above assurances may be realized, and the redeemed fall far short of that beatitude in which, in connection with holiness, we are taught eternal life is to consist. It does not appear to me that any such beatific condition is promised or even to be desired. Without new revelations of the Infinite One to be received, new service for him to be rendered, present mysteries to be solved, and desires gratified, an intelligent being would sink into apathy and indifference. In 1 Peter 1 : 12 we are told that the angels desired to investigate the great mystery of the incarnation; and the inference is that they were not permitted to do so. Although every will, whether of holy angel or redeemed sinner, will be in harmony with the will of God, and perfectly and cheerfully subordinate thereto, both revelation and reason, I think, teach that there will always be something in the future to be gained, some wish ungratified in the present, and while this is the case, one cannot be said to be in the realization of perfect bliss.*

*Since the above was written, the writer has listened to an able and successful orthodox minister, who, preaching from Luke 15 : 7, showed con-

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These, however, are, to a certain extent, speculations in which I have no wish to indulge further than to allay the fears of some who may think the tendency of this book is to divest Heaven of all its attractions, and leave it hardly worth striving for.

An admission into the family of God's dear children, gifted with powers that never weary, and with companionship of the pure and holy to stimulate us to the exercise of those powers, with the presence and approval of our divine Lord as the reward for achievement,—these are the conditions attaching to the life which Jesus Christ gives to all who will accept it at his hand and upon his terms. They are not the life, but are its concomitants; and this life, under these conditions, is not for an age, or a century, but is as endless in duration as he from whom it is derived: "Because I live, ye shall live also." Does this conception of Heaven make it appear unattractive, and the crown of life an undesirable prize to strive for, even with consummate bliss left out? The consideration of a few more points will close my undertaking. In 1 John 2 : 17 it is said, "And the world passeth away . . . but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Here, to pass away, or come to an end, is set over against abiding forever. In John 12 : 34 the Jews say to our Lord, "We have read out of the law that Christ abideth forever." This in opposition to his saying that if he was lifted

clusively that the holy angels have their causes for sorrow and rejoicing, and that even God is no stranger to these emotions. This being so, the redeemed from among men have no reason to expect that consummate bliss is to be their portion.

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up from the earth he would draw all men unto him; and in 1 Cor. 13 : 13, the graces that shall abide are put in sharp contrast with those that shall come to an end. The meaning of "abide" is to continue in being, as is perhaps more clearly seen in Heb. 7 : 23, 25, where the Greek word translated "continue" is the same as is translated "abide" in 1 John 2 : 17. Now if only those who do the will of God abide or are continued in being, what becomes of those who refuse or neglect to do his will? Here is no question of happiness or misery, no allusion to the conditions under which the existence is maintained in either case. The one class "abides," is sustained in continued being, and the plain inference is that the opposite class, like the world, which it chooses for a portion, passes away.

In 1 Cor. 15:26 we read: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." If death, which is the penalty for transgression, is eternal alienation from God and holiness, with consequent, constantly augmenting suffering, how can this in any sense be said to be destroyed so long as it exercises unlimited sway over such multitudes, or even a single one of our race? The penalty for sin is death, and if this is a synonym for endless misery, then death never is destroyed or "made of none effect" (for this is the meaning of the Greek *Katargeō*, translated "destroyed"); his reign is co-eternal with that of God himself. But this cannot be, for "*He* must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, for he hath put *all things* under his feet." At the coming of our Lord to judgment, every one of our race upon whom death has any claim

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shall be destroyed with an eternal destruction; and he, left without a single subject in existence over whom to exercise his authority, shall "become of none effect." Upon any other teaching respecting the final award to the wicked, I cannot see how death can, with any propriety, be said to be destroyed. The place given by our Lord in his teachings, as well as by his apostles in theirs, to his resurrection from the dead, is corroborative of the definition herein given to "life" and "death." The stress placed upon this event by our Lord himself, as well as by his apostles, is easily understood if these words are taken to mean as herein defined; but if they mean the relation of our moral natures to God, I can see no necessary connection between the two. Our Lord, when in the flesh, predicted to his apostles events that were in the future, with the announced purpose of confirming their belief in him when they saw the fulfillment of these predictions. John 13:19, 14:29, 16:4 are instances of this; and in John 2:22 we read that "when he was risen from the dead his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them," *i. e.*, that he should rise again, "and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said unto them." In Acts 1:21, 22 we see the eleven about to fill the place left vacant by the death of the traitor, and the only requisite named, if not the only one essential, was that he who took it should have been the constant, personal attendant upon the ministry of Jesus, from his first public appearance till his final ascension, and the only declared object is that he might, with the eleven, be an unimpeachable witness, not to the teachings of Jesus, nor to his mira-

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cles, nor yet to his claims of the Messiahship, but "of his resurrection from the dead." Also, in Acts 4:33, we read: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus;" and more than thirty times the fact of his resurrection is mentioned by the apostles as the ground for belief in him, and as the confirmation of his claims. What was the distinctive claim made by him? John 3:16 says he came that whosoever believeth in him "should not perish but have everlasting life." John 4:14 says, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." In John 5:21 we read: "As the Father raiseth up the dead and giveth them life, so the Son giveth life to whom he will;" and in the twenty-fifth verse, "the hour is coming and *now* is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." (The son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:12), the ruler's daughter (Mark 5:41), and Lazarus (John 11:43), though four days in the grave, heard that voice and lived again.) "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," and "the hour *is coming* when all that are n their graves shall hear his voice and come forth." And in John 6:33: "For the bread of God is he which came down from heaven and giveth life unto the world; verse 40: "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day;" verse 47: "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life;" verse 51: "I am that living bread; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever;" John

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8:51: "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death;" John 10:17, 18: "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again;" and John 11:25, 26: "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."*

These quotations show the distinctive claim made by Jesus was his supremacy over death, and his ability not only to restore this mortal life when it has become extinct, but to confer an endless life upon those who believed on him. With these assertions of his power over death so plainly, repeatedly, and openly made, what would have been the effect of his remaining permanently under the power of death but a complete refutation of all his claims in this respect, and the consequent overthrow of his authority as the Son of God? Supposing it had been possible that Jesus could have been holden of death (which in Acts 2:22, Peter says it was not), that pentecostal sermon would never have been preached, nor the scenes of that day witnessed; nor would the name of Jesus ever have fallen upon our ears. His failure to rise from the dead would have consigned his teaching, also, to the grave. This it is which makes the establishing of his resurrection so essential in the very beginning of the apostolic ministry, and, once demonstrated, lays a foundation upon which the religion of Jesus Christ can rest as secure against all its enemies as the very throne of God. But admit that the life and death of which he

* 1 Jno. 5:10, 12.

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speaks as being the sole arbiter are not actual life and death, but the relations which we sustain toward God as his rational, accountable creatures, and there does not appear to be any necessary connection between his resurrection from the grave, and the fulfillment to believers in him of all his promises to them.

If eternal life is a changed moral nature, and new relations toward God on the part of those who are made partakers of it, Jesus might as well have rested in the grave with David, and no argument could have been drawn from that fact against his power to give eternal life, *i. e.*, forgiveness of sins, a renewed nature, and complete happiness to his followers. But what says Paul in 1 Cor. 15 : 17? "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins, then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." With our definition of "life" and "death" this conclusion is perfectly logical, but, as I think, with no other. If eternal life means as is herein claimed, a life principle over which death has no power and which insures the possessor an endless existence, and Jesus claimed not only to possess this himself, but to be alone able to bestow it upon whomsoever he would, and in his own person could not escape from the dominion of death, there certainly could be no hope for those who depended upon him to rescue them from its power; but, as Paul says, all who had fallen asleep in this hope, instead of ever having it realized, had perished. Every one can see the correctness of the conclusion he draws from his premise, and if the apostles were to go on winning men to the acceptance of Jesus as a Saviour from death, and the only source of eternal life, it was abso-

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lutely essential for them to show that, having in his own person laid down his life, he had the power to take it again. If, on the other hand, eternal life means forgiveness of sins, a new heart and the heavenly felicity consequent upon these changed relations toward God, where is the logical necessity between his rising from the dead and his ability to confer these benefits upon his followers?

I do not understand from his own teachings or from that of his apostles that his rising from the dead was needed to satisfy men of his power to perform these offices for them. He proved his power to forgive sins by healing of the palsy, and sending away whole the man whose sins he had forgiven. Matt. 9 : 6. His power through the work of the Holy Spirit to renew the heart was proved in many instances, notably in the case of the woman who was a sinner (Luke 7 : 40, 50), and so far as I can see there was no such connection between his rising from the dead and his ability to perform these offices for those who believed on him as to render his efforts on their behalf absolutely ineffectual in case his body had remained in the grave. "If he cannot deliver himself from the power of death he certainly cannot be depended upon to deliver others." This is logical, but it does not necessarily follow because he cannot deliver himself from the power of death that he cannot do something of an entirely different character for those who believe on him.

There are, it seems to me, two points at which Jesus Christ as a Saviour most vitally touches our humanity. Man is under the power of *sin* and *death*, and utterly helpless in himself to escape from either. Jesus Christ in his own experience demonstrates to men his power

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over both before he asks men to rely upon him to undertake for them. The wilderness of Judea, and the tomb of Joseph, the beginning and the consummation of his earthly ministry, demonstrate his *power* to save from both sin and death; and the record of his daily life, while for three years he walked this sin-stricken earth, the healing, loving, sympathizing man of sorrows, equally demonstrates his willingness to do so. There is one other passage collaterally significant in 1 Cor. 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The term "flesh and blood" I take to mean the life derived from Adam through successive generations, with all its possibilities and limitations; and this I gather from the connection in which it is used in the following places, which are the only ones in which I find it used in the Bible. In Matt. 16:17 our Lord tells Peter that his knowledge of his divine nature and misson did not come through any human agency, either within or outside himself. The language is, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in Heaven."

When Paul was commissioned to preach the gospel he did not take counsel with his fellow-men, or ask instruction from them regarding what he should teach. He said, "I conferred not with flesh and blood." Gal. 1:16. In chapter 6:12 he says, "We wrestle not with flesh and blood," evidently referring to human agencies as contrasted with superhuman. And Heb. 2:14 declares that when the Son of God assumed the work of our redemption, he took upon himself our humanity, or as it is in the text: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh

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and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." It seems certain from the connections in which the above quoted verses are found, that the meaning of flesh and blood is as above given, or, to state it more concisely, "human nature." What then does Paul mean when he says that human nature or flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God? He is not referring merely, nor as I think primarily, to man's moral nature as unfitted for the place; but, to his organic being, which, in its constitution, debars him from any participation in this kingdom, which is an everlasting kingdom as well as a righteous one. "But unto the Son he saith" not only "a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom," but, as well, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." Heb. 1:8. "And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." Dan. 7:27. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." Ps. 145:13. "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:33. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly unto the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 1:11. "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ [his anointed ones?] and he shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11:15.

The above quotations are perhaps unnecessary as warrant for the assertion that the kingdom of God spoken of by Paul is unending in duration. Not only is

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it unending, it is also supreme. No being can become a citizen of this kingdom owing the slightest allegiance to any besides its rightful Head. Not only must the bond-servant of *sin* be freed from the rule of his master, but the tyrant *death* also must relinquish all claims upon his subjects before they can be translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. It is the subjection we are under to death, I think, of which Paul is here speaking as debarring us from entering into the kingdom of God. The whole context warrants the belief that this is so. Our human nature which, because of its subjection to death, cannot inherit this everlasting kingdom, is to be redeemed from the dominion of death by the begetting which is from above, is to be endowed with eternal life, and so capacitated for a citizenship in Heaven. This throne which is forever and ever, shall extend the scepter over no subject not as enduring as itself; and all the citizens of this everlasting kingdom shall be everlasting also.

These imperfectly expressed thoughts and poorly arranged arguments are given to the public in the hope that trained minds, and able pens, may be enlisted for the confirmation of the views herein advocated, or for their complete refutation. All that the writer desires is that their establishment or overthrow shall be by the word of God, and not by the word of man.

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